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A NEW WAY TO PREPARE A HARE FOR DINNER, BY A PROFESSING COOK!!!

COMFORT

FOR

SMALL INCOMES.

BY

MRS WARREN,

AUTHOR OF

"HOW I MANAGED MY HOUSE ON TWO HUNDRED POUNDS A YEAR,"
"HOW I MANAGED MY CHILDREN,"
AND EDITOR OF "THE LADIES' TREASURY."

LONDON :

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PREFACE.

THE result of some years' experience in small matters, which go to make up great comforts, is offered in this little book. Some may sneer at, and some condemn, these small economics, but it should be remembered that "there is nothing in this earth so small that it may not produce great things." And amidst every household toil of a wife, and every energy of a husband to obtain money for family needs, what can be greater than to know how comfort is to be had for the money expended. Chief among the chiefest of evils are wastefulness and unskilfulness in cooking, which cannot be too greatly deplored when there is no money but that arising from a limited income; and where there is ignorance of the art of making the most of everything, there seems to be no remedy. What comfort can there be in dining off stewed meat rendered tough, tasteless, and full of fibre, of eating potatoes soddened with water, or greens boiled to a mash, and of a rusty colour, of having before one stone-like artichokes, tasteless and rusty-looking carrots, which if one partakes of, a fit of indigestion, with its train of horrors, is sure to follow. Boiled meats and fish—which are insipid—or fried fish, greasy looking and white, cause far more trouble to produce than if they were cooked by a proper process; to help the mistress in giving instructions in these important trifles, and on which comfort so much depends, has been the author's aim.

In most homes there is a tendency to leave small matters to take care of themselves. With servants there is a perpetual waste of candles, soap, coals, and cinders. These articles are not very

often interfered with by mistresses with incomes of £200 a-year, but in all of these an unobserved waste brings a pinching in other requisites which are really necessary for comfort. Even the melting away of a penny a day amounts to upwards of thirty shillings a year. At Christmas many comforts may be obtained for this sum, or it would gladden a starving or sick fellow-creature.

It is against waste of every kind that one should war. A hospitable heart and economy are twins. We should be careful that we might be liberal. Waste in small matters, and profusion in large, is burning the candle at both ends, not to be compensated for by stinginess in any household department.

There is also a great waste in using unnecessary ingredients in cooking, which may not be unnecessary to persons with large incomes, who give entertainments, and who, if suffering from indigestion, can afford the time to be ill, and money to pay the doctor. To these may be safely left the eggs, the cream and butter, which enters so largely into what is termed first-class cooking. A custard is much more enjoyable—and the flavour is equally good—when made with milk, and the exact number of eggs to thicken the milk, than it is when made with an excess of eggs added to cream. Those who desire to have a bilious attack need swallow but half a custard made in this extravagant fashion.

Again, rice puddings are richer tasted and entirely wholesome when made without eggs, and with milk only, no water. But if the precaution be not observed of first washing the rice three or four times in boiling water, then not all the richest ingredients can destroy the offensive musty taste which the grain has acquired. Well-flavoured arrowroot puddings, made with boiling milk only, are excellent, and these can be made in a moment; when water only is used for them, an addition of a glass of sherry makes excellent jelly for the sick who cannot take meat jellies.

The French cooking of roast meat, poultry, and game, which most English people say they so much admire, owes much of its excellence to the process of *larding*, and to its being slowly cooked by a proper degree of heat. The directions for larding, as given by a French cook, are, to cut up shreds of bacon and tie it on to the article to be cooked, or to introduce these shreds with a larding-

needle underneath the skin. Now, the same flavour and moistness can be given to English cooking by economising and using the bacon fat which drips from the bacon when cooking it for the morning meal. It is no extravagance, but a real comfort for persons of moderate incomes to enjoy a small quantity of bacon for breakfast ; if the mistress is watchful to take the bacon fat into her own possession, and to see that the bacon be cooked in the same manner as described in Chapter III., otherwise bacon, butter, or lard must supply the need when called for.

In the Appendix will be found many useful hints, which will assist an unskilled mistress. It may be as well to remark that servants will invariably set their faces against any appearance of economy. Nor is it worth while to dispute the matter with them. If a mistress will once try the recipes and directions given for cooking, superintending the whole process herself, even to the minutest particular, she will then find it so easy to obtain well-cooked food without any uncertainty in the matter, that, however unskilled her servant may be, she will herself hold the power of mastership in her own hands, and be able to create comfort for her household, and a reward for herself in the well-being of her family.

How such a mistake could have arisen—that it is beneath a woman's dignity to superintend the cookery of her kitchen—it is hard to tell. Surely she need be none the less accomplished in all the refinements and acquirements which are visibly attractive, because she is invisibly invaluable in her domestic experience. Woman should be an adept in all domestic work, not always with her hands, “unless a scant fortune wills it,” but with hand and heart, and judgment and skill to guide the rough worker placed by the accident of birth beneath her care. Her husband and children cannot be fed and cared for by song and music, by drawing or dancing ; but after a wholesome, well-cooked meal, all these certainly add to their enjoyment, and frequently to their happiness.

Those who suffer from indigestion are always cross, they cannot help it, it is the natural effect of a cause ; and one ill-cooked meal will give the malady for a week, which nothing but frequent exercise in the day in pure air can cure ; and when one badly-

cooked meal presses upon another, a man cannot be amiable, his purse-strings are closed, and his heart has become stone.

When a woman knows the simple principles of cooking well, just as she could learn to sketch and to play correctly, she is independent of the sudden desertion of her servants, and can manage to place a respectable dinner on the table, with but slight assistance, or she can

“—sit apart, and in the cool direct—
Observant of what passes—others' toil.”

Isaac Disraeli, in his chapter on Ancient Cookery and Cooks, remarks—

“ No people are such gorgers of animal food as our own ; the art of preparing vegetables, pulse, and roots is scarcely known in this country. This cheaper and healthful food should be introduced among those who neglect them, from not knowing how to dress them. The peasant, for want of skill, treads under foot the best meat in the world ; *and sometimes the best way of dressing it is the least costly.*”

It is certainly true that no more healthful food exists, even when plentifully eaten, than potatoes, greens, turnips, carrots, and onions, when properly cooked. They are also very nutritious, and added to a very small portion of animal food, will cleanse and purify the blood and banish fever. The authoress is greatly pleased to know that, while the articles which form the present book were appearing monthly in the LADIES' TREASURY, her directions for cooking vegetables were appreciated by numberless subscribers to that popular work. After a successful career of nine years, this Magazine, still retaining its old title, will appear in a new and more attractive form, and through the year many subjects of domestic interest will appear in its increased number of pages.

This little book—“Comfort for Small Incomes”—is not intended to supersede the promised Cooking Book, called the “Epicure,” which, as soon as the author's numerous engagements will permit, will be published ; but it is hoped that it will in a measure render a mistress able to cook her own dinner, if her “plain cook” should be ignorant or turn restive.

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COMFORT FOR SMALL INCOMES.

CHAPTER I.

OLD SERVANTS—NEW FACES—HOW TO KEEP A DINNER WARM—EARLY
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WHEN I first went to my new home after our bridal tour of only a fortnight—for my husband, a surgeon, having his way to make, deemed it impolitic to remain longer from his patients—I found everything belonging to household matters that could give me comfort had been arranged by my mother and my husband's sister, Anna Wynter. My chief cause for thankfulness was in two servants, who had lived for some years with the latter when she kept her father's house.

With these domestics, mother and daughter, the last about eighteen, everything went smoothly. I could listen complacently to the narratives of the trials with servants of my lady visitors, and in my heart deemed that they, and not the domestics, were in fault. I argued that if girls were treated kindly and considerately, they would be well-behaved and grateful, and that mistresses alone were to blame for taking any with indifferent characters. For these presumptuous thoughts I have been well punished since, “The same measure ye mete to others shall be meted to you again,” has been amply verified in my case. I have repented of all such uncharitable constructions.

For four years my happiness was complete. My two children were healthy, loving, little creatures ; my husband's practice was increasing ; and my servants were all that could be desired—obliging, clean, industrious, and methodical. Susan was nurse

and housemaid combined, and her mother was a good and faithful housekeeper. One day, about three months previous to the birth of my third child, as I was in the kitchen arranging for dinner, and giving directions for some particular cleaning, cook said, "If you please, ma'am, Susan is going to be married to Alfred Jones, the wheelwright, as soon as you can get suited, and they are going to Australia, and I am to go with them."

My dismay at this announcement may be conceived. I had nothing but good wishes to offer both, for the intended husband was not only industrious, but had recently come into property worth £300, and in their taking the mother with them they were fulfilling their duty. There was nothing for it, but to promptly supply their place, which I thought could be easily done; only there might be a little confusion at first, soon to be got over.

Just a week before my confinement the new servants entered upon their duties. I had an excellent character with them from a lady who lived a few miles distant. They wanted higher wages than she could give, and that was the reason for the separation. The house of the lady was scrupulously clean, so that I was satisfied on this important point. Within a few days after their arrival I had misgivings as to their capabilities and competency for their situations; the rooms looked dusty, the grates dull, the knives stained, and there was a general air of discomfort exceedingly annoying to me. I knew that for a month I could not interfere, and thought it best not to commence fault-finding, but to bear with all shortcomings till I could be about again. My chief care was for my husband and children.

Allen could rarely dine at our regular time; he could never say when he would be at home. I did not grumble at this, but devised a remedy whereby he could at any hour have his principal meal at a moment's notice. His dinner of meat, potatoes, and gravy was arranged in a soup plate and covered; other vegetable in a second plate, also covered, and both were kept hot over two saucepans of *nearly* boiling water, so that not an instant was lost in serving when it was needed. At the same time the family cloth was laid another was placed on a separate table with serviette, knives and forks, and the usual condiments. I do not say that the dinner had all the fresh flavour which belongs to one eaten at the right time, but habit made the loss unperceived. My little ones dined with me every day, but the housemaid waited cut up their food, and attended to their wants, and as they were taught never to touch the things on the table, nor to ask or cry for anything, it was a peaceful, comfortable meal; and if my husband

was fortunate enough to join us then, he was never worried, though come when he would, if not present when the dinner was served, he found it cut off and sent to keep warm. He was first cared for, whether present or absent.

For his tea boiling water was always ready ; and up to this time I had never any trouble about it ; but with the new servants a different order of things was introduced. I remonstrated without effect two or three times at the neglect, and it ended in my having the kettle brought into the sitting-room, and then I could see if the water was kept boiling. I did not mind this in the winter, and in the summer I hoped a change would come.

Time went on until my baby was born, and I was able to sit up. The children had been brought to me each day, but I had observed that nurse was absent previously for a longer time than she ought to have been. I suspected how matters stood ; but the little things were well in health, and I forbore inquiries, though it was evident from their rough hair, tumbled frocks, and unsmoothed pinafores, that but small care was expended on them. Still, silence was the best policy.

When I first came down-stairs I saw with dismay the dirt and disorder which reigned supreme. I thought the nurse might have seen to much of this, and said so, but she turned away without reply.

“This is something like,” was Allen’s remark at his dinner that day ; and as I looked up, inquiringly, he went on : “I have been treated to some frizzled dinners during your absence, which I didn’t quite like ; I suppose things will go right now.” Nurse heard this, and coming over to me, said,

“Another week and you will be stronger, ma’am ; don’t say anything yet.”

Three days after both servants came to me, just as I was down-stairs.

“If you please, ma’am, our month is up to-day, and as your place don’t suit us, we wish to leave.”

“But surely you should have given me notice of this before,” I said.

“We were only on a month’s trial, and we never gives notice, then,” was the reply.

“You cannot leave for a week,” I said. “I have no servants, and must seek some.”

“Well, ma’am, we don’t mind staying two or three days to oblige you, but we must go away on Saturday.”

This was Wednesday, and the following Monday, at a village

three miles off, an annual revel was held, which I thought explained their haste to depart. In the afternoon, though not strong enough to do so, I went into the kitchen to take a survey. The sight that met my view was by no means encouraging—dirty corners, stained tables, lustreless coppers and tins, and a close, unhealthy, drain-like smell pervaded the place. Things were bad, indeed, but complaint could only make them worse. I did not even insist upon the house being cleaned, for they would have left me on the instant. Moreover, I was afraid to complain, fearing they might give me a bad name. Saturday came without my finding their successors. The nurse that was with me was a comfort, and so we muddled as we best could ; but now her stay could only depend on her services not being called for. With my former servants I had never made any kitchen allowances—they were treated just as my mother's had been : they made their tea from our supply ; sugar and butter they used at their own discretion ; they were neither extravagant nor wasteful.

During my month's absence from the household I had directed that no bills should be paid till I was about again, but that everything ordered was to be entered in a book. On inspecting this I was astounded at the quantity of articles consumed—tea, sugar, bacon, and butter enough for a family of a dozen people, and I had no remedy but to pay for the robbery. Nothing was left, not even a piece of soap or jar of dripping. My husband and myself were surprised at the unprincipled mistress who had given us such excellent characters with these servants ; and as her residence lay in the way of his daily route, he volunteered to call and remonstrate upon the deception which had victimised us.

The lady received and listened to him with all courtesy, and explained that she had answered all my inquiries satisfactorily, but it was out of her way to volunteer information ; that the girls had left because she could not give high wages, as she did much of the work herself, such as dusting, making pastry, and also constantly overseeing them. Besides, she never deprived girls of characters for want of cleanliness, because that was only a matter of opinion , the dirt some ladies would not tolerate, others would think scarcely worth notice. Servants were not to be had as formerly ; there was no one to train them. If girls were honest, it was all that must be looked for, the mistresses must make them do their work well.

“ But their extravagance was great. Allen, did you mention this ? ”

“ Yes, but Mrs Slater said it was better to allow the girls the

articles they would require for their own use, lock up all the rest, and give out a daily supply for the family's consumption."

"Lock up!" I exclaimed; "I never did such a thing in my life, and how can I tell how much they will eat and drink? I don't think even mamma knows, for I am sure she never put her servants on allowance."

"Then call on Mrs Slater and ask her; she is a shrewd woman, and I don't think the minxes would have served her as they have you."

This advice did not quite suit me. I said I would consider. Meantime I sought and obtained two other servants, one an elderly woman, the other about twenty, both with good characters. All went on pretty well for a time, but it is necessary to recollect the proverb, "The eye of the master is of more worth than both his hands." I now began to find that the housekeeping was running beyond the sum allowed for it; the consumption of butter, tea, and coffee, was nearly as much again as in the previous year; for ourselves we consumed no more than usual, but there was waste or peculation somewhere. I said at last to the cook, that as my expenses were increasing, I must devise some plan to lessen them. "I will give you and Mary sufficient tea and sugar for a week, and as the beer has only lasted eight days instead of a fortnight, you had better give me the key and I will regulate the consumption."

The storm of words this proposal raised I long remembered. She quickly replied that "no *lady* would do such things," and as she was not to be trusted she would leave that day month; and leave she did, successfully using all her influence with Mary to accompany her. The next lady this cook went to she told her our place did not suit her, as we were mean enough to starve our servants. So soon is a bad name given to a place by unprincipled characters.

The next helps I obtained from a registry office in a neighbouring town. I was very averse to this course, but a fortnight with but a charwoman's assistance made me glad to get servants from any source. This time I determined to control the expenditure, and the verbal agreement I made with them was most precise. I was to give them so much money beyond their wages that they might find themselves in tea, sugar, beer, and washing. After obtaining personal and satisfactory characters, I felt like one from whom a great burden has been lifted. Now, I thought there can be no cause of dissatisfaction. Alas! alas! things went just the same. If I left the room with the tea-caddy unlocked, its contents speedily vanished; the sugar went faster than ever; and the

butter, of course that was always consumed in the parlour, and the eggs were used in the puddings.

Mamma came to spend a week with us, and to her I unfolded my trouble. I had shrunk hitherto from telling her my misery, fearing she might think I was a bad manager, but she consoled me by saying that good servants suitable for middling class families were not to be had—they had all emigrated; among the higher class it was altogether different.

“But what ought I to allow for a servant’s consumption?” I asked. “This is my great trouble.”

“Just the quantity you consume yourself, excepting in the article of tea, and of this I would give them an extra allowance, because a cup of tea is to them as refreshing as a glass of wine, and when they are working hard a stimulant of this kind is very grateful. Give me a pencil and I will write down what is a liberal but necessary weekly allowance for each servant:—A quarter of a pound of tea; half a pound of sugar; half a pound of butter. One shilling a week beer money to the cook, and sevenpence to the housemaid. The washing, too, if you put it out, must be limited for them, or you will have white sleeves and frilled or worked petticoats to pay for.

“You may fancy the tea is rather extravagant, but it is only two teaspoonsfuls at breakfast and the same at tea for each; if they choose to drink coffee instead of tea, by all means let them have it—three-quarters of a pound to each. Bread, cheese, and meat, of course, as much as they please, but no waste. Bread is a very prolific source of disagreement; the tops and bottoms of the loaves, the well-fingered crusts that have been left from grating bread crumbs, are all wasted—thrown or given away to beggars, who in their turn despise them and throw them in any convenient secret place; they never eat them. Don’t suffer bread to be used in this way for crumbs. Cut off the loaf as thick or thin a slice as may be needed, pare off the crust, and set it by to be eaten at the first opportunity; peel off, also, the hard or outside and give to the birds, then the remainder break up and rub through a colander—there will be no waste; and in cutting bread for dinner, pare off a very thin slice of the outside, as no one likes this, and if needed cut the loaf to within a finger’s length of the bottom, then divide it into six pieces, and there will be no waste.

“The cutting of bread should, as in olden time, be seen to by the mistress.* One loaf ought to be consumed before another is

* The word lady is derived from the Saxon, and means, “to serve bread.”

cut, and new bread on no account be eaten. I am glad there is no side-door to your house. I knew one lady with a large grown-up family, who, closing this up, her bread-bill was reduced four shillings a week. All the pieces had gone to the beggars, who threw them away."

"But, mamma, I allowed the last servants money to find their tea, sugar, and beer ; why could they not be content, and not take mine ?"

"Why not, indeed ? Simply because they do not consider the taking these articles to be theft, so save their money, and supply themselves from your stores, to which keys are no barriers. I know an instance where for a fortnight a lady regularly filled her sugar-basin and tea-caddy, kept them locked, but used none herself, yet the contents were daily abstracted ; of course the thief was discharged. I observe you keep beer in the house ; if you can trust your servants with the key, it is all very well ; but unfortunately the love of drink is so powerful, that it is a dangerous experiment. In our house, you remember, no one drank beer, so practically I know nothing about it ; but if you have it in cask, you must not give the girls money to find their own, otherwise they will keep their money, and drink your beer."

"Why are girls so tiresome, to want all this supervision ? I am sure I would gladly let them have all they desire if they would not pilfer."

"I can't tell you why they are so ; all you have to do is to prevent, as much as possible, wasteful expenditure. You must not expect to keep your servants for years, as many people once could ; they are altogether become a different race ; they cannot be left to their own guidance, but must be ruled. It is not sufficient to give them the order of the day, and arrange their times for doing their work, but you must also see that it is done."

"Mrs Reeves tells me that she keeps every drawer and closet locked ; it seems to me a despicable act—it looks so suspicious."

"The best way to avoid giving offence, Janet, is to adopt a good plan, and then keep to it. If every place and drawer are unlocked when a servant first comes to the house, and after a week you suddenly lock up, it is a grave matter of offence to an innocent girl ; she feels herself suspected, and is unhappy ; but if it be your constant practice, this habit of locking, why no offence is given, none taken, and an honest girl would prefer to live under a methodical mistress rather than under a careless one ; though I have known a cook to leave a good situation because the key of the store closet was not intrusted to her keeping, and a housemaid because her

mistress kept her drawers locked. Servants who show these impertinences should be discharged at once.

“ You will find soap and candles speedily disappear in unthrifty hands ; both must be limited. Soda, also, though very inexpensive, will be lavishly used, to the detriment of most things ; and a superfluity of matches will be wasted, either in burning or in throwing them on the floor, to the danger of their igniting and setting somebody on fire. Give a liberal allowance of food and drink, but save when you can in the little things, for they insensibly amount to a good sum in the year.

“ I remember when we lived near London how much was wasted in wood for lighting fires. Most servants used a halfpenny bundle for one fire, or they would let the fire get low, and so burn wood to make the water boil, just like the make-shift ways of the poor. Now one halfpenny bundle should light three fires. With every new servant I had, there was at first discontent in this matter, till I showed how it could be done with even a less quantity. I generally finished my lesson by saying, ‘ You will thank me for this when you become a wife,’ at which there was a titter and good humour returned. All this happened before you were born, and when I could only afford very indifferent help. For eleven years, you will recollect, I kept Sarah and her sister, so that you saw none of this trouble.”

“ But now, mamma, about the soap and candles ; surely I cannot limit these.”

“ Indeed you must, or you will have half a pound of soap left to soak away in no time, two or three candles lit up at once, and the ends be thrust into the grate to light the kitchen fire, with no heed to the grease which drops on the hearth below, and when the hot cinders fall, fills the house with a detestable odour.”

“ Now then, mamma, tell me what is really necessary for one servant’s weekly supply. I mean not only in food, but in soap, candles, and soda, and the cloths I must give them for their work. Money goes fast in this way, and they declare they have not had them, and that I make a mistake when saying they have. Just tell me, and I will write it down at once. Say for a general servant.”

“ Tea, a quarter of a pound.

Or coffee, three quarters of a pound.

Sugar, half a pound.

Beer, a pint a day.

Or beer money, a shilling a week.

Soap, half a pound.

If to wash her own clothes, a second half pound.

Soda, one pound.

“ Candles must be calculated according to whether there is gas or not used, and whether work in the morning has to be done by candlelight ; but never give out more than half a pound at a time, and observe that the pieces are burned in the candlestick.

“ Seven cloths for wiping crockery ; two dusters ; two house flannels—one for the floors, made of old flannel doubled and strongly quilted together with coarse cotton, and a second for the stones—a piece of much worn drugget or felt carpet answers best ; two dish-cloths, a kitchen roller-towel, and one table-cloth ; two scouring leathers, a scrubbing brush made of fibre, and a pail ; also a large but not too rough towel for her bed-room.

“ A housemaid, in addition to the requisites of tea, sugar, &c., will need only half a pound of soap in a fortnight for her up-stairs work, for rooms should never be scrubbed with soap—they get greasy and dark. Salt is excellent, as it is rough enough to remove dirt, and it will keep the rooms sweet and clean, and destroy bugs and fleas.

“ Then she will require two flannels, one for cleaning paint, the other for her floors.

“ A cocoa-nut fibre scrubbing-brush ; a painter’s brush for cleaning out the small corners of her stairs, &c. ; a round dusting-brush ; a baluster-brush, hard on one side and soft on the other ; an American sweeping-broom for carpets, and a hair broom.

“ Two rather coarse but thin cloths for rubbing wet floors dry ; two soft window-cloths and a soft leather for polishing windows and glass ; some rotten stone for cleaning windows, not whiting ; also a supple leather for plate ; a soft plate-brush ; a somewhat harder one for scrubbing the crevices of silver articles ; a box of plate-powder—powdered hartshorn, prepared from bones, is the best.

“ Four glass-cloths ; four check or linen dusters ; four cloths for wiping silver forks ; also two towels in the bedroom ; a housemaid’s pail, and the ordinary tin pail and cover in use in every house.

“ Both servants must have provided a yard and a-half of common American cloth, for laying down before a fire-place, not to injure the carpets when cleaning the grate.”

“ But, mamma, I have a piece of felt-carpet nailed down on the space which the rug covers, for I am quite sure the servants would not take the trouble to bring up the cloth.”

“ Perhaps this is a better plan, but you must not forget three sheet-like wrappers for covering over the couches, piano, and chairs, in the sitting-rooms, previous to sweeping them, and also to cover the beds on a cleaning day.

“There may be other little things which do not at this moment occur to me, which doubtless I shall recollect; but remember one thing—do not give out too many cloths of any kind, or they will, when dirty, be either burned or thrown away, as I suspect yours have been.

“In the kitchen there should be a circular wooden bowl and a semi-circular chopper, sharp at the edge, for chopping suet, or mince, or potatoes, or onions, or parsley, in half the time consumed by any other method, and in a more perfect manner. Also three irons, one with a very long handle for burning sugar; two wooden spoons—one for the flour tub, and one for mashing vegetables and fruits; three tin strainers—one for straining milk or custard, one for gravies, and one with a pointed end for pouring melted butter through into a sauce bowl or tureen; three baking tins—one a large oval tin for baking meat, a smaller round one with fitting cover, for hashes, stews, or haricots, and the third, an oblong square, with a narrow rim, for a Yorkshire or plum puddings. I do not mention cake and other tins, these must be had as the family may need. Those I have mentioned are absolutely necessary for use and comfort, and so are scales and weights.”

“But I thought, mamma, the Yorkshire puddings were always baked under roast beef.”

“Not always; it is sometimes inconvenient; a large fire and a good-sized joint are necessary for this process. A Yorkshire pudding is equally good, made in the following manner:—Put three tablespoonfuls of cold beef dripping into an oblong square tin, and let it boil in the oven; meantime beat with a whisk in a basin a pint of milk, two eggs, and a pinch of salt; add by degrees six ounces of flour, till a smooth batter is obtained, then strain and pour it into the boiling dripping; bake it in a very hot oven for an hour, then, half-an-hour before the meat is taken from the fire, set this tin in the dripping tin, and let the meat drip upon it. To my liking, Yorkshire puddings are better and lighter this way than any other.

“There is an equally good but sweet pudding, for which you will find the round tin, *without the cover*, useful. Take a pint of milk, one egg, a little nutmeg, and two ounces of moist sugar, beat them together, then add by degrees three piled tablespoonfuls of flour, till it is a smooth batter; slice four apples quickly, lest they turn black, put a tablespoonful of dripping—or bacon fat is best—into the round tin, make it *very hot*, strain in the batter, then bake it in a very hot oven for an hour. This pudding should be eaten with cold butter. Now, with those directions, I do not think you

will fail to make good batter puddings; but, remember they must be served very hot, otherwise they are worth nothing."

CHAPTER II.

THE STUDY OF A MISTRESS TO PLEASE SERVANTS—HOW ONE SERVANT MAY DO THE WORK OF TWO—GOSSIP ABOUT TRAINING SERVANTS—AN UNEXPECTED CHECK—SERVANTS' REGISTRY OFFICE—SERVANTS AND THEIR DRESS—HOW BAD SERVANTS GET PLACES—A TEACHABLE YOUNG GIRL.

ALL the directions for managing my servants which my mother gave me I sedulously followed, but yet did not succeed in establishing the peace and order which I had been accustomed to in my girlhood's home. I pondered much over my vexation, for do what I would the dinners would be ill-dressed and badly served, and the general work neglected, unless on each day I went over the same routine and made the same remonstrances.

Surely, I thought, it must be my own fault that such a state of things exists. I will be more considerate, and save the servant's steps all I can. I will think for them, manage their work, and all else that I can do; I will even help them, so that I can have peace. A delusion that I would warn every one against.

I then paid higher wages, and got worse servants. I became very particular as to their characters, and invariably found that the worst servants managed to obtain the best recommendations. This was the mistresses' fault, who from a mistaken idea that they were serving the transgressing girls, concealed the most important of their shortcomings, and by thus doing brought down upon them reproach, change of place, and all kinds of evil, and upon themselves the reputation of untruthfulness.

After two years' discontent and change of domestics, my housemaid was taken ill and went home; then, to my astonishment, instead of the household work being in confusion, everything went pleasantly on. My three children had been but little trouble to either servant, and in the absence of Mary I had them entirely under my own care. They were quiet, strong little things. It was the cook herself who first asked me if she should take them for a walk; I assented as if it were a thing fully expected of her, but I was utterly surprised, and sat down to read the riddle. It was unaccountable that the work which two servants could not perform, one was able to do, and that in a much better manner than before.

My cogitations were interrupted by a visitor whom I had myself to admit in the absence of the girl. I laughingly told Mrs Lester how I was situated.

"They are great plagues," she remarked, "particularly if they have not full employment. There is some truth in the adage that with one servant the work may be done, with two the chances are that it will be half done, with three—why then one may as well do it oneself. I have quite work enough for two servants, and never permit them to be idle. There is no time for gossiping in my house till after seven at night, and then I never interfere unless their voices are raised too much."

"But, Mrs Lester, my mother kept servants a long time; how is it that I am obliged to change so often?" I asked.

"Simply because the old race of servants have died out or have emigrated, and there are none left to take their place. Most young mistresses are deficient in domestic practice, then how can the poor creatures learn? I have always found the easiest way to obtain good servants is to take them young and train them to their work. It is true that as soon as they are taught they 'want to better themselves,' or they find the place dull, or there is too much running up and down stairs, or the work is too heavy; or, indeed, any excuse for getting away, having a fortnight's holiday, and then, with the last pound in their purse, they find another situation, where after six months, the same routine is gone through, till in two or three years they can describe the different suburbs of a large city, besides the town itself."

"But how depressing to be always beginning this kind of work."

"It was so at first, but with me it has now become an established order of things, and I don't mind it, though I thought I should have gone wild at first. It is a sad thing to say, but I find that a weariness comes over the girls when they have been six months in a situation, unless there is some counterbalancing charm to keep them in place. Perhaps it would be the case with us if we were servants. I am inclined to think that if ladies who were born under rose-coloured hangings had first seen the light in the dirt and squalor of poverty, they might have been equally deficient with the poor girls who really are the greatest plagues of one's existence."

"Do pray tell me how you manage, for I am so tired of this cat and dog life. I have heard of somebody writing to the *Times*, saying, 'We never have bad servants, we take the daughters of our tenantry, and place them under the tuition and training of our older servants—'"

"Excuse my interruption, but it was this very letter that made me adopt the plan of training which I have pursued for three years, with considerable comfort to myself and family, and with a decided advantage to the poor girls themselves; though beyond nine or ten months—in one instance only, twelve months—I have never been able to keep them, they have always discharged themselves, for in their nature there is such an inherent love of change one would suppose them to be human locomotives; when they get up a store of wishing for change, up goes the steam of temper, off they go, no matter what the danger a-head may be. Mr Lester says it is the same with our daughters, only they find a safety valve in parties, and in gossiping morning calls. He is of opinion that if Georgina were kept as strictly to study, as a servant girl is to her work, there would be danger that we should find her missing some morning."

"Certainly, the servant question never occurred to me in this light before, but tell me how you manage to get on so well with these girls?"

"Just think, Mrs Wynter, how you would play a piece of music if you had never learned, how you would sew, or write, or read, if never taught. Then how is it possible for a young girl, whose father does not happen to be a lord's tenant, or her mother to have ever been in service, to learn her duties? if there is no one to teach her, how can she ever be an efficient help in any household? You understand how to perform most domestic work, and I think you know the art of cooking much better than I do myself; I am sure if you were to try your hand at training some of these ignorant girls, you would find your own advantage in it. Don't expect too much at first, 'line upon line' you know, but as for 'precept upon precept' that may as well be left out, or you will be treated to an aside you won't like, 'Lor, how misses do jaw, I can't mind half what she ses.'

"I am only warning you not to teach too much at a time, and while you are teaching a girl don't speak more than you are compelled to do."

I thanked my friend soon after, and deeply I thought of all she had been saying. There had been so much comfort in my parents' home with only one servant, that I could not understand why two should cause me so much trouble. Some days after this, as things went so comfortably, I did not trouble to replace Mary, the cook came to say that she wished to leave, as it was so dull, and she had always been used to a fellow-servant.

As the girl suited me I was sorry for this, but by no induce-

ment that I could offer could she be prevailed upon to stay. I then made up my mind to the change, though I so hated it.

My husband said that two servants must be had, one only in the house of a medical man did not look respectable.

This decided the matter. For some time I inquired in the neighbourhood, at shops, and among friends, for their recommendation of any girls, till the month of the cook's notice had nearly expired. That she meant to leave was evident in her manner ; she startled me one morning by saying, " If you please, ma'am, which hour to-day will it be convenient to you to see a lady respecting my character ? " so I knew there was no hope of her remaining.

" But I am not suited, Jane ; surely you will not think of leaving before I get some one ? "

" The lady has no servant, ma'am, and both I and Mary are going to her on Monday, if my character suits."

My astonishment was unbounded. " Why did not Mary ask to come back to me ? "

" Because I wrote and told her that you said it was so much more comfortable with one servant ; that she did not think you cared to have her back."

" But how came you to know that I said so ? " I asked, " I never told you."

" I have heard you tell master twenty times, and you told Mrs Lester so when she was here."

A lady then called, and from her I learned that scarcely any servants were to be heard of excepting at the registry offices, where ladies were making up their minds to go as a matter of course ; and she highly recommended one in a neighbouring town, that was reported to have always a great number of servants to choose from. I did not quite like this mode of proceeding, but when I found that girls were to be obtained in no other way I reluctantly gave in, and the next day made my first appearance in this, as I afterwards heard, excellent home for servants.

On my arrival I found upwards of twenty ladies sitting round two rooms opening into each other with folding doors, some of them unmistakably gentlewomen, yet they were apparently engaging with the most odd-looking young women, whose manner and dress appeared almost disreputable. Crinolines like hooped casks, feathers, veils, earrings, flounces, and long trailing dresses were the order of the day ; just as if the girls had equipped themselves from a variety of rag-shops, such was the style of their costume. Not one girl that I saw would I have taken into my

service. At the end of eight hours, tired and cross, I left unsuited, and after a weary journey of six miles in an omnibus, I arrived home feeling that this had been the hardest and most unsatisfactory day's work I had ever experienced : and worse, I had to endure a repetition, perhaps more than once, for I heard one lady say to another, that she had been to the office every day for three weeks and was unable to find a useful general servant. What a prospect for me who had only four days in which to obtain some help or other.

The second day found me less particular in my scrutiny of faces and attire. I had always a habit of endeavouring to find out mysteries, and so I began to speculate upon what freak possessed these girls to come in their tawdry finery, from wherever procured, rather than in their proper working clothes. The afternoon came on and yet I was unsuited. A lady whom I had seen the day before, now entered and addressing herself to me, asked if many servants had been hired. I could not tell. The ice of reserve once broken, I asked her if the girls really were servants.

“ Oh ! yes, they are servants, and some of them good girls too.”

“ But their dress ? ” I remarked.

“ True, that is the fault of thoughtless mistresses who give them their cast-off clothes, and the girls, I am told, generally make a holiday of the remaining hours after they leave here, and go with the young men of their acquaintance to cheap places of amusement, which they could not do, you know, in their working clothes. I wish to find a general servant, though I keep two others ; and never hire a cook, notwithstanding it is what I need, for as a regular cook will not wash up breakfast things nor, in fact, go out of her way to assist at all, it is quite out of my power to hire one, and especially for the reason that my husband's income will not admit of any extravagance, the common failing of half-educated cooks so called.”

“ But there must be good servants to be had if one only knew how to get them,” I replied.

“ Undoubtedly there are, but they seek and find places in a different class. They have been trained to work, and understand what is required of them, and how to do it. They are desirous of keeping their places, and would deem it beneath them to obtain a situation other than by recommendation. But all are not good servants who get a footing in families of rank and position, as I have known to my cost, for under the impression that I was being admirably suited, I hired a young woman who had been kitchen-maid in Lord C.'s family, never reflecting that had she been worth

keeping she would never have descended to the rank of general servant.

“By the way, efficiency in this class of servants is difficult to obtain. I do not at this moment recollect more than two that really were what they professed to be, but they are usually good-tempered, soft-handed, idle, and inattentive, but honest young women, who have grown up to do as they liked, without an idea of method, or thorough cleanliness, and to whom active orderly mistresses are perfect torture ; who take to impertinence as a defence, for what mistress will make reply to insult ?

“I am now seeking a young girl of sixteen to train her to my work. I begin to think that I have found my mission—as it is said that every woman has one—and that is to train up servants, as it would seem for others’ benefit hitherto. However, it is but a return to the days of our great-grandmothers ; they spent hours in their kitchens, and trained their servants to work, and their daughters in their own steps. Now we want to find good household helpers ready-made to our hand, without any effort of our own. This we know cannot be, unless about some thousand training schools were opened for their manufacture ; and even then I do not see that mistresses of the middle class would benefit much, for the colonists abroad would be sending over premiums to the girls to emigrate, offering each a good home and a good husband.” And my new friend laughed heartily, as she rose, saying “It was no use staying longer, the girls had gone home to their tea-dinner at three o’clock, and would not return.”

“Yet there are plenty of young women sitting down there,” I remarked ; “why don’t they come up ?”

“They are not young women ; they are waiting for the chance of finding some very young married lady who trembles at the very thought of her responsibility, and who would be glad to find a steady middle-aged woman who would take all the worries of housekeeping off her hands. And here comes a lady of the kind—a sort of Dora Copperfield, you know.”

Truly, as she had said, the lady was followed by a host of women varying in age from forty to sixty, and even older. I was greatly amused at the pretty mincing way in which the lady addressed the fawning, cringing creatures, one after another, as they came to her. They were evidently not quite the sort she desired to have, but it seemed as if she must select one of them.

“I am very particular, and my husband is almost exacting, and he wishes to have the cooking very nicely done, and you must be very punctual,” she said to the youngest of the party.

“ How many is there in family, mum ? ”

“ Only my husband and myself. A housemaid is kept.”

“ Do you keep much company, mum ? ”

“ No ; we have no dinner parties.”

“ Then, mum, I think I ’d best not come ; because there can’t be many perksites—I always has the dripping, and two folks don’t make much.”

The lady bowed, but made no reply, though her face flushed. Another and most repulsive-looking woman came to her, and again the whole matter was detailed.

“ Have I got to wash up, mum ? ”

“ Certainly ; and you have to place the breakfast on the table, and should we require anything during the time you will have to attend.”

“ Then, mum, I shouldn’t suit you. I want to get a superior place.”

“ But mine is, I think, a superior place, and a very comfortable one,” the lady condescended to reply.

“ Cooks don’t never wash up things in superior places, and I haven’t come to that yet,” the woman muttered, as she turned to go.

Others came in their turn—one could not get up early, “ Good families never required them to do it.” Another never liked to live where beer wasn’t kep’ in the house ; and another always paid the household bills herself ; and, again, one hoped that the kitchen cloths were washed out ; and so on to the end of the chapter ; when the poor girl-wife looked so worn out and wearied that I pitied her ; still she made no advances to speak, and in turning to look down the stairs her eyes encountered the most cunning looking woman coming up that I had ever seen.

The poor lady sat down almost in despair, but, contrary to her expectations, the woman demurred to nothing, she accepted the situation as it was offered to her, making no stipulations whatever ; and so, contingently upon her character suiting, the woman was hired ; and as she stood at the table while the lady wrote her address, she gave to her companions in the passage such a diabolical wink of the eye as I had never witnessed, which spoke as plainly as possible, “ I ’ve done for her.” The lady, glad to be released, went on her way rejoicing, little suspecting how she had been duped.

I afterwards heard how the affair ended, for the lady was a new comer in the neighbourhood, and a near neighbour of mine, though I had not then seen her. The woman entered her service and be-

haved so badly, that sooner than have the annoyance of her for a month she had been paid a month's wages and had been sent away.

Several friends whom I have since known, have been served precisely the same. These women actually gaining their living by their misconduct and fraud.

My second day in the registry office had come to a close. Some servants would not go out of town, others would not live where children were, others objected to wash, some wished to have their friends once a-week, others must go to church twice every Sunday, and so many objections were raised and conditions imposed, that it seemed as if I was never to get a servant. I no longer looked at the dress—if it were only a little decent was all I cared for ; I was reluctant to begin the teaching business—I offered good wages, and the same allowance that my mother said was usual, and I offered to put out the washing ; all was readily accepted—but when I came to inquire into their cooking abilities, and I always commenced by asking how soles were fried, how greens were boiled, and other simple matters—the variety of replies was amusing, but their character showed how little the girls knew of the subject. I had one day's grace, if I could not succeed in finding help then I must perforce take a girl and teach her.

The following morning, as I was entering the office, I met two young women, who wished to find places together, both were dressed in black, and consequently looked tidy. I forbore to question them as to their capabilities ; they had a twelvemonth's character, and a personal interview could be obtained with their mistress at no great distance. I observed that the housemaid appeared extremely delicate, if not ill, but was told that she had looked so from a child. To make a long story short, they had not been in the house more than a week when the poor pallid girl was taken seriously ill, and obliged after a week to be removed to her home ; a case of suppressed illness, my husband called it, on purpose to get nursing and medical attendance. I afterwards heard this was no uncommon occurrence. Then the cook got unhappy after the first month, and she too must go ; notwithstanding I looked over much shortcoming, got a girl in to help with the children, and attended to much of the cooking myself. I afterwards understood that a gasfitter in the neighbourhood had persuaded her to leave her place for a distant town where he had employment.

Repeatedly I had to endure this same trouble ; every two or three months my visit to the registry office was a thing to be an-

ticipated. As for cleanliness in the house, thorough cleanliness, I had to give up as unattainable ; my kitchen looked dingy, the tins were unscoured, excepting when I had a woman in for this purpose, who helped to make the house still more unsettled by gossiping and relating the news of the neighbourhood. I began to find that I was but an upper servant paying high wages to incompetent persons and doing the work myself.

So the teaching business had to be tried. It may be said that I had a guarantee for my servants' conduct in the characters I received with them. Not so. One-half of the characters were made up of false statements, and the other half concealed just what should have been discovered, under the pretence of not "injuring poor girls" by exposing their shortcomings. Thus the new mistress is deceived, and the girl probably dismissed with ignominy, to meet a questionable fate. If mistresses were true, servants would be honest and industrious ; at least, they would endeavour to be so, but so long as they can obtain fresh places without difficulty, by false representation, so long will they set an orderly methodical mistress at defiance, and give the best place a bad name. This opinion is the experience of a lifetime. The chief reason why servants are so indifferent, is that mistresses have themselves helped mainly to make them so, by giving them undeserved characters, and by concealment of their chief faults.

So to begin my servant's education, and realise some comfort myself, I sought and found a clean, pleasant young woman to take care of the children, and required from her neither needlework nor any personal attendance. She had to attend to the nursery entirely. There the cook never entered. And soon after, I was recommended to take a young girl, industriously brought up, and teach her cooking ; but this did not happen till I had tried several servants, who disgusted us with their slovenly ways, dirty habits, and extravagance. I began almost to doubt whether the happy days of Susan and her mother were not entirely mythical, whether they were not the remembrance of some happy dream.

The girl's name was Keziah, she was cleanly, intelligent, and observant, three qualities I had not found in any before.

"Have you a love for cooking ?" I asked.

"Yes, ma'am, I would do anything to become a cook."

"Simply to cook is easy enough, but *can you have a place for everything, and keep everything in its place?* The saucepans must be kept free from grease. The cloths be clean and ready for use. The larder be neat, clean, and free from all that would taint meat or butter. The bread-pan must be wiped out daily, and the pastry-

board and rolling-pin be kept white and sweet. All these things are necessary for a cook to attend to, besides fifty other needful matters which will be required of you in time. If you think you can do all these things, then I will try you, if you will have patience, and be as observant and thoughtful as you can."

I would just remark, that without the two last qualities a mistress may as well attempt to carry water in a sieve, as expect to reap any benefit from teaching her domestics.

CHAPTER III.

POTATO EGGS—STALE AND FRESH EGGS—BACON FAT—ITS USES—HOW TO WASH CROCKERY—A DIGRESSION ABOUT BLACK BEETLES—HOW TO DESTROY THEM—TO PREVENT A BOILER FROM CRACKING—TO BOIL MUTTON TENDER—A HINT ABOUT THE BONES—TO BOIL CARROTS—TO PREPARE AND FRY CUTLETS—TO STEAM POTATOES—A RICE PUDDING WITHOUT EGGS—MEAT STOCK—HASHED AND POTTED BEEF—VEGETABLES TO BE WASHED IN WARM WATER—PEA SOUP.

KEZIAH had lived some six months with a lady and she thought she knew something of cooking, so I was informed the first day of her trial, and if I would let her try she felt quite sure she could cook the simple dinner of boiled beef, carrots, and potatoes. I thought it just possible that the girl might have been properly taught, and so left her to herself. Had my husband been coming home that day, I should scarcely have ventured the experiment.

The dinner was behind time for serving nearly an hour, and then I went into the kitchen, for I had been engaged with some callers who seemed to set in that morning with a determination to monopolise me.

"Why are you so late, Keziah?" I asked.

"The carrots are not done, ma'am, I can't think why."

I looked into the saucepan, they were nearly black; the potatoes were a mash, and the beef was boiling very rapidly. I must confess that I was angry, and said,

"Now, Keziah, whatever you think you know about cooking you must endeavour to forget; the dinner is spoiled. You have put the carrots into cold water, and with soda; the meat is very hard, and the potatoes are watery and smell of the iron of the saucepan. The carrots must be thrown away, and the meat I dread to taste."

I had the potatoes turned out, the driest portion of them taken

off the top, and mixed with a tiny bit of butter and salt ; I then buttered an iron spoon, filled it with potato, pressed the potato with another spoon so as to form it to an egg shape ; then I turned these " potato eggs " on to a flat dish, rubbed a little butter over each, then placed them before a huge and glowing fire, which the girl had wastefully kept up. In a few minutes the " eggs " were browned ; they were then turned on the other side and browned. At last they made a very presentable dish. I should observe that it was in March, when the potatoes were but indifferent, and the carrots old. The beef was, as I expected, hard, dry, and tasteless. Keziah volunteered the information, " Of course, that must be the butcher's fault, who sent such bad meat." I did not then answer her, but the old adage came to my mind of the nameless one who sends the cooks.

In the evening, as I was looking round the kitchen to see that all was right before going to bed, the girl asked me if I would tell her why she had failed in the dinner ? " It is of little use to tell you now, Keziah ; some day we shall have boiled beef again, and I will show you how to cook it."

I have ever found the entire uselessness of teaching how a thing is to be accomplished, except at the actual moment when it is about to be done.

The morning brought its troubles. I thought surely the girl can toast some bacon without my going into the kitchen so early. Alas ! it came plentifully sprinkled with cinder dust, on a cold dish decorated with parsley sprigs, and half filled with brown dirty-looking fat. There was just time for me to go into the kitchen, put a rasher of bacon on the toasting-fork, and get it ready before Allen came to breakfast. I saw it was useless to complain, so I did not annoy him with my worries. Presently I lifted a boiled egg, it was hollow, and the uncracked end turned upwards for appearance sake. The second was the same. This will never do, I thought ; it is easier to do the work oneself. I must confess to great irritation of temper, by what I could not but deem the girl's stupidity. Then I recollect how often, lately, I had the same sort of thing to put up with, and in addition had to pay high wages, "*with everything found*," while with Keziah the rate of payment was trifling, and she was content with tea from our teapot. This consideration made me patient.

After breakfast I went into the kitchen to commence my day's teaching. " Now, Keziah, be watchful ; this is the way to cook bacon. You see that I have cut the bacon into slices, and I will first show you how I do this ; scrape the rind until it is quite

clean, now turn a dish upside down, put the bacon on it, and with sharp knife and carving fork, pare off the rind as thin as possible, and lay it on one side ; now turn the bacon over, pare off all the brown surface ; now cut between each bone, and take each out singly, so that there is no waste, and all the lean is left on the bacon. Put away the bones with the rind ; these will serve to flavour soup. Now turn the bacon edgeways, and by sticking the fork into the end firmly, with the spring-guard up, and with a large sharp knife you see, I can cut the bacon into thin slices and without a particle of waste. In doing this at a leisure moment, time, trouble, and inconvenience are saved, but as you are too young to manage this, it is best for me to do it myself. How came you to break all the eggs to-day in boiling them, Keziah ?" I asked.

" Directly I put 'em in the boiling water, ma'am, they burst. I didn't put 'em in hard, not at all."

" Remember to put them in quite cold water and let them boil slowly ; as soon as they boil they are done. It is because the weather is cold, and the eggs are not new-laid, that they burst. All disappointment in this way can be saved by putting them into cold water instead of into boiling ; but a new-laid egg is best held in a spoon for a moment over the steam, and then put in boiling water ; in three minutes the egg will be set."

" But I've seen new-laid eggs put into boiling water for only a minute or less. My missis used to eat 'em because she was in a decline, and the doctor said they was most nourishing that way."

" It is quite true, they are an excellent diet for invalids when they are new-laid, but would be too expensive in my family, so we must make the best we can of the freshest eggs we can buy at a cheap rate. Now about the bacon, Keziah. You must not fry it as you did this morning. I told you to toast it before the fire. Why did you not obey me ?"

" I couldn't find anything to toast it in, and I had too much to do to hold it on a fork, besides the fire was so hot."

" Now then, bring me two old flat dishes, a large one, and one a size smaller. Turn the smallest upside down in the largest, letting one side of the dish lie on the edge of the large one, draw out the grate-rack in front of the fire, now observe that I lay the bacon on the upper dish which is slanting, and put it before the fire, only a sufficient distance from it to prevent the cinders from falling in. Thus you see the bacon gets gradually cooked through while the fat runs into the dish below, and when cold will be perfectly white, and is equal to any lard for making pastry. You see, I can't

afford to have the bacon fat eaten, it must always be saved. As soon as the bacon is ready it must be put into a hot dish and be served directly, afterwards the fat be poured into a clean preserve jar or basin ; then wash up the dishes and put them together, and see that they are never used for anything but toasting bacon.

“In another place you may be desired to send the liquid fat to table, and by this means of toasting the bacon you can have it nice and white instead of peppered with cinder dust.”

“I never knew any one take account of bacon fat before, ma’am.”

“Perhaps not, and yet, Keziah, if I were very rich indeed, and knowing as I do the use of it, I should direct it to be saved. The French are very celebrated for their cookery, and they use a great deal of bacon cut into strips for what is termed, larding the meat, or game, or poultry, and of course no one gets the benefit of the bacon because it is generally dried up and hurtful to eat ; now, I like to eat the bacon for my breakfast, and save the fat to lard or drip the meat with. Veal, fowls, and rabbits, when roasted should always be covered with bacon fat, and then be well floured before putting to the fire ; by so doing all the juices of the meat or poultry are kept in, and it does not become dry. It is a wasteful practice to use butter for these things. Now you will understand how to cook the bacon to-morrow morning.”

“Yes, ma’am, I can manage now ; and I’ll wash up the breakfast things.”

I went into the larder for five minutes, and hearing a great clatter of crockery, returned to see a large pan used for washing vegetables, filled with glasses, plates, cups and saucers altogether, over which Keziah was pouring a kettle full of boiling water ; one of the glasses snapped as I entered.

“Oh, Keziah, you must not do that ; get the two small tubs that you will find on the shelf in the scullery.” They were brought. “Now then, wash the glasses one at a time with cold water in the tub that is only made to hold one glass ; if you wash them in hot, they will look dim. Then wipe them with one cloth and polish them with another ; and for the breakfast things, put into a basin all the slops that may be in the cups and saucers and throw them away, not into the washing-up water ; then scrape all the pieces and scraps off the plates into one of the dishes ; these pieces will go to feed the chickens. Now wash the cups and saucers in the large tub. First get a piece of rag and a little soap to take off all grease spots and stains. Now rinse each cup and saucer in cold water, and turn them upside down on a tray to drain.

"Take a little more boiling water and wash the plates and dishes ; rinse them and drain them also ; then wipe the whole, commencing with the cups. Now throw away the water ; collect the jugs, pour some hot water into each, don't use boiling water, or the bottoms of each will crack round, and come out. Take that common bristle brush which you see hanging yonder. Now wash the inside of each with this, and throw the water into the tub ; then stand each jug singly in the tub, and with the brush a little soaped, clean the outside and also the crevices of the handle. Now rinse each and turn it to drain, then wipe them and turn them upside down on the dresser-shelf, and you may be certain that neither dust nor black beetles can get in. Take fresh water and a very little soda and wash out your cloths, put them in a pan of cold water to rinse, then hang them in the air to dry. Now wash the trays and scrub the table, then wash your face and hands, and then you will have finished this part of your work." Keziah was tractable, and did as she was told, though it took more than an hour to instruct her in that which I have narrated in such a breathless manner.

Numberless kitchens are infested with black beetles, which are difficult to get rid of. It is a mercy that these creatures are inoffensive ; that they neither sting nor do they leave a poisonous trail ; still one does not like to eat the food they have crawled over, or drink from any vessel in which they have made a resting place. I once met a servant in the street who had been sent out to get beer, and was returning with it. I saw her put her finger in the beer, take out a beetle, throw it in the road, and proceed home-wards with this questionable beverage for somebody's luncheon or dinner. That we sometimes imbibe the essence of beetles in perfect innocence of the cause which permeates the noxious beverage, the following relation will show, and is the reason why we have now no boiler attached to our kitchen grate ; there had been one indeed, but it had been broken from the carelessness of one of my many "helps" (?) ; for having neglected to keep the ball of the self-supplying boiler in good order, the water in the grate boiler had dried away ; and then instead of putting a kettleful of *boiling* liquid in she pushed down the ball and let in a deluge of cold water, when the iron immediately cracked. At some expense we had a second boiler put in ; within twelve months this was served in the the same way, but not before I had found constant fault with our tea, it had such a peculiar taste, totally unlike anything I can describe. I examined the great cistern, the kettle, and the teapot ; there was no cause for it in either of these. One day standing in

the kitchen I saw the cook fill the kettle from the boiler of the grate ; I remonstrated with her, and desired it may not be done again, as I liked to have perfectly fresh water for my tea.* Still day after day the same unpleasant flavour continued—predominated over the aroma of the tea and coffee. After a time it was announced to me that the boiler was cracked, and as suddenly the peculiar taste which I complained of vanished. In domestic matters, if things by breakage or otherwise go wrong, I have found that the best way is to have them speedily replaced or repaired ; and so I gave orders to have another new boiler put in. Curiosity led me to the kitchen just as the man was taking out the supply boiler. I looked in and saw that it was half full of the dead bodies of beetles. A very pretty trap this boiler had been for catching them, nothing could exceed it. Instead of the cover having been put on again at each time that the ball had been regulated, it had been left off. The beetles crawled up the wall, and being of an inquiring turn dropped from thence into the cistern to meet their death from their temerity. The mystery was solved. The order for putting in the boiler was countermanded ; and since then it is needless to say none has been attached to the grate, all the water is made hot in kettles, or for baths, in the washing copper. Where beetles infest a kitchen it is scarcely possible to prevent their getting into the supply boiler, and constant care is asked from the mistress to see that it is kept clean, unless it be entirely enclosed.

A thoroughly good servant would not use the boiler-cistern for other than washing purposes ; but then such servants are—nowhere. Many are the nostrums and pastes advertised and sold for destroying beetles. Upon some of these pastes I have known them to thrive amazingly ; and a basin of raw soda is a luxury upon which they are very lively. I have also tried red lead with flour and treacle mixed, this will kill a few, but like most creatures with an instinct for danger, they are wary after a time. To make them commit suicide by drowning, or to have beetle-traps always kept on a kitchen floor, and elsewhere, if needful, is the only way to rid the house of the plague. Even then a mistress must see that its victims are regularly submitted to the action of boiling water, or the trap will soon be filled to overflowing. We can scarcely reckon upon girls doing anything but what they are compelled to do. To

* Water freshly boiled is not so good for tea as that which has been boiling for a long time, as then the earthy matters are precipitated in the form of "rock," and the water for making tea becomes softened. Two ounces of tea will go as far as three, if it be made with filtered rain-water.

empty a beetle-trap is not necessary for any meal, nor is it a part of daily service, hence it will be neglected.

I wish some antiquarian would tell us why beetles were deified by the Egyptians, then we may perhaps convert them to some use, as we do shrimps, which, to say the least of, are horribly carnivorous feeders, while the beetles are not, they getting their living mostly off the crumbs which are scattered about, and which—"are nothing to nobody."

From breakfast to beetles is a digression I must be pardoned. A servant would say, it came "permiscus-like." But it arose from explaining the cause why the jugs were to be turned upside down on the dresser instead of being hung up to serve as insect traps.

The breakfast things washed, the fire made up, and the sauce-pans to be used in cooking for dinner filled and put over the fire, we hastened up stairs to the bed-rooms. I should mention here, that our first morning meal was over by half-past eight o'clock, consequently it gave us a good start in the day instead of beginning breakfast at nine, a custom prevalent in too many families. Day after day I went with my pupil into each room and watched her proceedings, giving a hint here and there, encouraging, and showing kindly how the work was to be done. In making the beds I showed her how useless it was to shake the feathers from side to side only, instead of with both hands pulling the lumps abroad. It was difficult to her at first, but habit soon gave her power to get over it quickly. I rarely helped more, beyond standing on one side of the bed and assisting to arrange the bed-clothes, and with my own soft duster, taking the dust from my own and husband's toilet-table and placing the things on neatly. This I had always done with other servants, and it therefore was no addition to my work ; I did all I could to help, but unseen. If Keziah had witnessed me, the work would have been constantly left for me to do.

As the nurse attended to the children's room and her own which entered into it ; the work besides of two occupied rooms—our own and Keziah's—and two spare rooms was soon got over ; by eleven o'clock we were both in the kitchen to prepare the dinner. What remained of the cold beef was too indigestible to be eaten ; but I had a pint of stock made from the bones of a roast sirloin, and with this it could at a convenient moment be converted into excellent potted beef. The bill of fare for the day, which I had written out in the morning and placed on a nail solely appointed to these bills of fare, was boiled neck of mutton, veal cutlet and bacon, potatoes, and the remainder of the bunch of carrots left uncooked

from the day before, also a whole rice pudding. The water for the mutton was boiling in a saucepan of the shape of a moderate-sized fish-kettle, with a drainer. Five pounds of the lean end of the mutton were cut off and placed, with the bones *upwards*, in the boiling water ; then, when it boiled, it was sufficiently drawn back from the fire to admit of its simmering slowly. It would then stew till ten minutes to two o'clock, thus allowing twenty-five minutes for each pound of meat. This I was careful to explain to the girl, and why the bones were put upwards, as if they were placed otherwise the joint would curl up and look unsightly. Keziah told me she had a rule given to her that a quarter of an hour to each pound was sufficient for boiling mutton. I replied that she was right as to a leg of mutton, but not as to a neck or a loin, for a loin boiled tender is excellent eating. The neck especially is extremely sinewy, and is positively indigestible if not sufficiently stewed. Twenty-five minutes must be allowed for each pound of meat, both of a loin and neck of mutton.

The carrots were pared thinly, not scraped nor cut, and put whole into a saucepan of boiling water, with a lump of salt and a small lump of dripping, and they were to be boiled two hours. The girl quickly asked why the dripping was put in, and why the carrots could not be boiled with soda or with the mutton ?

I replied, "In the first place, carrots have no oil in them as greens have, hence soda would be useless, but they require very soft water, or they will not boil tender ; the dripping renders the water soft and makes them retain their colour and flavour ; the latter they would not do if they were cut ; and in taking them up if grease appears at all on them you have only to pour boiling water from a kettle upon them ; but the salt makes them eat crisp. If they had been boiled with the mutton they would have discoloured it."

As soon as the carrots were put in, it was time to prepare the pound of cutlet which had been cut thick. The meat or chopping-board was got for this, and upon it the cutlets were cut into thin pieces of the size of the bottom of a tumbler, and as round as they could be formed without waste. Then a thick, very thick batter was made in a basin of flour, a little nutmeg and salt, and mixed with cold water till it was nearly a paste. The cutlets were spread over the board, and with the carving-knife rapidly chopped all over and on both sides, and then instantly stirred into the batter, so that the juices of the meat should not exude. About a quarter after one o'clock the frying-pan was washed out with soda and water, and well dried ; then dripping was put in, sufficient to cover

the cutlets, and made boiling, the cutlets were put in separately, and in a few minutes fried sufficiently brown to turn on the other side ; when this was browned, the cutlets were laid on a piece of paper on a dish before the fire, and covered with another piece, to dry them but not harden ; lastly, the gravy was mixed by putting in a basin a piled teaspoonful of flour, a little nutmeg and salt, and mixing with a little cold water and milk, pouring in sufficient boiling water to set it ; then pouring away all the fat from the pan, putting in the mixture and letting it boil a sufficient time to thicken. It was then brown, and was strained on to the dish in which the cutlets were to be served. The cutlets were put in the gravy the instant before it was to be served, and rashers of toasted bacon rolled while cooking, were placed round the cutlets. By this process an egg or more was saved ; the veal was very tender ; there was no grease, and a very appetising dish was presented at small expense.

I should have said that at one o'clock the potatoes previously peeled, *with the eyes and specks well picked out*, and washed in two waters, were put in a steamer, then sprinkled with salt, and put on over the carrots ; and that at eleven o'clock two ounces of rice were washed three times in boiling water, then two ounces of sugar added, a little nutmeg, and a quart of milk was poured on, and the whole baked three hours, and thus a rich mass of gelatinous pudding was produced, that the most delicate stomach could partake of without apprehension.

And so ended our second day's dinner. I had then to superintend the washing the silver, the dishes, and all the other, thousand and one things, that go to make up the comforts and cleanliness of a home.

The beef, from Keziah's first unfortunate essay in cooking, had to be made useful ; we could not afford to throw it away. I cut all of it into the thinnest possible slices, almost like shavings. The previous day the bones of a sirloin of beef with a mutton bone, and a blade of mace, were boiled down in water for eight or ten hours, this had been strained through a colander, and now presented a thick mass of jelly stock, covered with a cake of cold fat, which was removed. I took a tablespoonful of flour, and mixed it with a little cold water, added a little pepper, and *set* it with a small quantity of boiling water, burned some sugar in a spoon, then poured boiling water over it into the basin. I nearly filled a pie-dish with the meat, had an onion peeled, and stuck with four cloves, put it at the bottom of the dish, the meat over it, then the flour mixture, and then added several spoonfuls of stock. The pie-

dish was covered closely with a flat one, then put in the oven for three hours. When it was taken up it was a rich gelatinous mass, digestible and nutritious.

I paid half-a-crown to learn the secret of this recipe for converting hard and dry meat into a rich compound without the aid of costly materials. Dining one day at a friend's table off a delicious dish of beef stew, I asked how it was made. I was told that the cook was clever at made dishes ; and was permitted to question her, but could elicit nothing more than that the meat was put in to stew for a long time. I held the coin between my fingers, and said,

“ It is yours, if you will tell me how the meat is rendered so rich.”

“ Only by using stock jelly made from bones instead of water, thickening it with flour, and stewing cooked meat two hours and uncooked meat three hours. If the goodness of meat be first taken out in the cooking, it stands to reason that something must be put into it to make it eatable when it is hashed.”

After this I never failed in a made dish. The richness and nourishing qualities were always the same ; the difference was in flavour, according to the vegetables and spices used, or omitted. Some are of opinion that stock made from bones does not nourish, but when meat is stewed in it it is very wholesome, agreeable, and digestible ; only, beware of too much spice, or too much flavouring of any kind.

The remainder of the hard beef was thus potted for breakfast, supper, or luncheon : all gristle, vein, and skin were thrown away, then the meat was chopped very fine, the thin shavings in which it was cut facilitating this rather troublesome work ; then in a wooden bowl with a half circular chopper it was chopped to almost dust, then sprinkled with a little white pepper and nutmeg, it was then beaten up into a hard mass, with a few spoonfuls of stock, then put in a small pie-dish, and finally some clarified butter was poured on the top. I prefer butter to mutton suet, because the former can be eaten, the latter cannot. And thus by conversion was Keziah's error obliterated.

It was a tedious trouble day by day to teach this young girl ; and constant watchfulness and forethought were necessary on my part. And more than all, I had to contend with her obstinacy of temper, very trying to a teacher. Keziah constantly endeavoured to get the upperhand in everything, which my utmost firmness could scarcely repress. Sometimes my heart failed me in my task, but I would then recollect how much comfort and good health

were gained by my family, to say nothing of the expense saved, and the order and regularity which, spite of occasional lapses, were very apparent.

We disagreed greatly in our ideas of cleanliness, particularly in the matter of saucepans and dishes. She would let the former get cold after the cooking, before she would clean them,—the only way I could conquer her perversity, was to stand by and see the water was thrown out of each, then to make her wipe them dry as possible before they had time to cool—then to rinse them again with hot water and wipe them with a dry cloth ; and, after a time, seeing how little trouble this gave her she readily adopted the plan. Now and then something would burn on to a saucepan ; for cleaning this, water was boiled in it, and I had a common birch-broom, with the handle taken out, the twigs bound tightly, and the fine ends cut short and even ; by using this, there was no scraping with the nails or a spoon ; the water had softened the burnt mass, which the scrubber soon got off. Keziah's dishes and plates were often sticky and rough, because she washed them in water in which vegetables had been boiled. The water now being thrown away, could not be had for this purpose, and before I left the kitchen for dinner, I saw the largest saucepan full of water put on the fire for washing up the dishes. I was compelled to see to this daily, till the practice became a habit with her.

It may seem trivial and unimportant to write about these things belonging to a scullery-maid's province ; but if saucepans are not clean, food cooked in them will be spoiled ; and if dishes and plates are sticky and rough, why the appetite suffers, and naturally the health is affected.

The girl had a great idea of her own knowledge in most matters ; she had lived for a short time in a place where several servants were kept, and I believe if she had been asked to take a cook's place, would have asserted her perfect competency for the position. Her astonishment was unbounded at my desiring her to wash some greens in warm water, not in cold. She persisted that cold water with salt in it was of all things the best to kill insects and worms. It was no use my assuring her that the insects might be killed, but they and the worms would both stick on, and that cold water could not get sand and dirt out of the greens. It took less trouble to do the thing myself than to conquer her unwillingness ; but I made her help me in the work. First I had a pan of warm water, rather more than tepid, and a second of cold water. After having carefully picked the refuse leaves from some cabbages, which the rain and hot sun intervening had covered with insects, I first took the

worst part of the leaves, which were literally full of life, and put two or three in the warm water, to show the girl how readily the insects fell off, leaving the leaf clean. Her eyes dilated as if I had been a conjuror. So fresh hot water was had for the cabbages, *each small head was washed singly*, and then put into cold water; and in the warm water each worm, and snail, and grub, found instantly a watery grave. I would remark here that if greens or lettuces are washed in the mass, and not *each singly*, the process is of little avail, yet better than washing them in cold water. No vegetables lose their crispness, or if for a moment they do, it is instantly restored by the necessary act of plunging them in the cold water. Who has not had their teeth set on edge by eating gritty spinach, sea kale, celery, or leeks, which need not have happened, if the cook had only known that to wash these things in two waters that are warm, and then immediately to lay them in cold for an hour, much trouble and time would have been saved. This is *one bit of comfort*, a knowledge of which cannot be too widely known.

I will here make a digression, to remark how necessary it is that vegetables which are to be eaten raw, such as lettuces, watercresses, celery, endive, &c., should by means of warm water be thoroughly freed from any possibility of animal life of an injurious character, being swallowed and received into the stomach. A recent scientific work* gives engravings of many such; among them a young fluke which, with forty-seven other specimens, were taken from the body of a young girl accustomed to drink pond water and to eat watercresses just as she gathered them, without cleaning; creatures that usually do not reside in the human body, but yet are found in the liver of sheep and oxen. Let any one look minutely on raw vegetables, and they will find the larvæ of this fluke insect, which only require a fitting vehicle to be conveyed to the stomach. Cattle eat their vegetables in a raw state, and swallow these insects; we do not, excepting salading, and here the danger lies, which can be obviated by washing vegetables in hot water. Pond, lake, and river water contain these larvæ; but when the water is boiled and suffered to get cold, there is no danger in drinking it, if one can forget for what purpose it has been so treated. These creatures do not exist in ale or porter, because the water from which these have been made is first boiled. But in ginger-beer, lemonade, and soda-water they may exist, if the water has been obtained from impure sources, which it would scarcely be to the interest of the makers to use.

* *Popular Science Review*, January 1865.

Fruit should never be eaten before the skin is removed, as on this skin, in the shape of "bloom," thousands of these parasites exist, only waiting a congenial hot-bed to make their way all over the human body, specially delighting—as in beasts—to attack the liver. No pears or apples should be eaten without first peeling off the skin; so by plums, and even apricots, nectarines, and peaches.

To return to Keziah, and her daily tasks, and my hourly patience. Pea-soup was her next difficulty; it required my constant watchfulness to keep her from what is termed *drowning* the peas, and thereby rendering them hard and uneatable. It was of little use saying to her, you must not do this or that; she, of course, knew better than her mistress, and unless she was watched would do the very opposite to right.

"The brown pieces must first be picked out, Keziah, from a pint of peas, (this quantity will serve six people,) and wash them twice in *warm* water, by putting them in a deep basin, pour on the water, stir up the peas—let them settle scarcely an instant—then pour the water off, now repeat the process; put two table-spoonfuls of water, and a table-spoonful of cold dripping or bacon fat into a saucepan that will hold three pints, put in the peas three hours before they are wanted, and let them stand on the top of the oven to swell; in half an hour, *if they are swelled*, add a small tea-cupful of *cold* water, and as they continue to increase keep adding the water (always cold) at intervals till sufficient is in; then let them simmer till twenty minutes before the soup is wanted. Then shred some celery and some previously cooked parsnip, and some onions very fine, *cutting the shreds of the last so that they fall in rings*, then chop across the shreds. When the peas are boiling, dissolve a teaspoonful of salt in a little water, and stir into the soup, then throw in the vegetables, let them boil ten minutes, and strain the soup through a colander, beating through the thick portions of the peas with the back of a wooden spoon. Return the soup to the saucepan, let it simmer. Mix smoothly in a basin a table-spoonful of flour with a little cold water, add a little of the boiling soup to it, then strain the mixture into the soup, let it simmer once; and this, with the addition of toasted bread cut thin, and after toasting, slightly buttered, then allowed to cool, and cut into dice-shaped pieces, will make an excellent soup without the expense of meat in making it."

Keziah could no more have remembered all this than she could Hebrew, it was "line upon line, precept upon precept," with her in everything. But there was this satisfaction, when she understood

the reason for doing a thing she always practised it, while older and better paid "plain cooks" would not. Plain cooks, indeed, were they pretty or plain, their doings were ugly enough.

"Don't you see the comfort of making soup in this way, Keziah?" I asked.

"Not 'zactly, ma'am."

"Well, then, the comfort is, that the peas are sure to be cooked sufficiently. Peas are small balls of flour,—like potatoes are—if you covered them with water they could not burst into flour, but would be 'drowned' in the water and sink to the bottom of the saucepan, and if you boiled them for twenty hours they would be no softer. Then, again, peas will only cook well in soft water—the dripping makes this soft ; if you were to put soda in the water it would turn the peas black."

"Then, why didn't you put in the mutton bone, ma'am ? They always boils bones in the pea-soup where I lived."

"Because I could not afford the bones ; they will go to make stock, you know, and the dripping answers better, and is less oily than the marrow and fat on the bones ; besides, the dripping prevents the peas from burning.

"You saw me put in the flour and water, if I had not done this the fat would have separated from the peas, and floated on the top ; whereas, by adding the flour and water and putting it into the soup, it mixes altogether, and makes the soup digestible."

"It's a comfort to know all this, ma'am, because peas is a good dinner with a bit of bacon and a potato, leastways, I used to like it, though our peas was always hard, 'cos mother used to throw in the peas an' fill up the saucepan with water and let 'em boil eight or nine hours ; sometimes she put 'em on over night, but they was always hard," was Keziah's remark.

"You will recollect peas and potatoes must never be covered with water, that is why I have the last steamed."

"That's how they never gits wrong ; where I lived before, the master complained every day about the potatoes, they were very hard, or else all of a squash ; and then my missis sent word they was to be partly boiled, and then the water strained off, and then a cloth to be put over them ; an' she sent down a clean cloth for cook to do it ; an' so she did the first day, but then cook took the cloth for something else, and did not wash it afterwards, and master said the potatoes did not taste well after that, and I didn't see how they could, for the cloth was so dirty. I'm sure I couldn't eat 'em after the cloth had been over 'em."

"The steamer is the best thing in which to cook old potatoes

You will never forget that the potatoes must first be washed, then be peeled, and afterwards be washed in two waters, and be lightly sprinkled with salt, otherwise they will be bitter and a bad colour; but recollect that young potatoes cannot be steamed, they must be put into boiling water with a little salt, boiled very fast, then the water be strained off, the saucepan be turned upside down, then reversed, and the cover taken off; and, finally, put the saucepan on the fire for two minutes. The potatoes, if freshly dug, will soon break up mealy; but if they have been a long time out of the ground, then they will be waxy, and sometimes bitter, and frequently servants get blamed for what is really not their fault. Potatoes must not lie in water more than two minutes before cooking."

CHAPTER IV.

DAILY BILL OF FARE—THE MANAGEMENT OF SOME SERVANTS—NOTICE TO QUIT—HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF AN ERROR—WHY SOME SERVANTS ARE SO TAWDRILY DRESSED—WHETHER A MISTRESS IS COMPELLED TO GIVE A CHARACTER OR NOT—THE CONSEQUENCES OF GIVING A FALSE CHARACTER—DECLINING TO GIVE ONE UNDER SOME CIRCUMSTANCES.

I FOUND, if Keziah saw any indecision in my manner as to what was to be had for dinner, she directly gave her opinion that it was best to have so and so, an interference I disliked very much. It was very rarely that the bill of fare was unwritten when I left my room, but on some occasions it would happen so. A mistress will find it much to her comfort to think over the orders for the day before nine o'clock in the morning; and the easiest of all plans is, to write out the bill of fare and the tradesmen's orders, so that no occasion for lingering and gossiping round the kitchen door shall arise. It is all very well to say that it is hard a servant cannot have her gossip as well as the mistress; but there is a time for all things, and the best part of the day for work is soon lost, and then arises discontent or worry because there is so much of the day's work to complete in the afternoon; forgetting that once the golden hours are lost, order and regularity are at an end.

The cause of some annoyance in the house is the having too many servants for the work, then the master and mistress have a

miserable life. Empty brains, such as house-servants generally possess, are always on the alert for mischief, which usually takes the form of gossiping about former places, relating scandal, and passing remarks—generally invidious comparisons—upon both places, old and new. A servant is happier herself, and indeed for that, the mistress is also, when both are fully employed, when both have to *contrive* for the leisure hour.

Repeated holidays are a fertile source of discomfort; just as a child who is at school can learn nothing if constantly taken from his studies, even so, servants can rarely, under two or three days, be brought to the routine of work after they have had a holiday. A friend once told me that she dreaded new servants, who stipulated for a day out every three months, to buy clothing; for the next few days afterwards, the pert answer trembled on the tongue, and the flippant manner was so provocative of reproof, which if it were given in ever so slight a degree, it was, "Please, ma'am, to suit yourself this day month." It seems hard against the girls to record this, but it is the truth; and if a mistress wishes to retain her servant, she will keep herself out of the way for three or four days, till the cross temper of the damsel has evaporated through her work.

But it just happens that the day the girl is absent the mistress has to turn servant for a time, and she necessarily comes across some "hidden hoards" of dirt and flue, some light forsaken corners, which have escaped her notice in her daily visits to her kitchen; let her beware of bringing them under her servant's notice for some days, or there will be a tempest. The soft words of the girl's lover, or the thoughtless counsels of her friends, are still lingering in her ears; or the love of change, or the sense of freedom, which one day out, away from constraint, gives her, are all too new upon her, and she "will not stand it," when her attention is directed to the discoveries which have been going on in her absence.

These experiences are not written in the spirit of condemnation of servants; for if mistresses were suddenly metamorphosed into domestic helpers and servers, they would not be one whit the better themselves, and possibly might be worse. This should be thought of more often than it is; at the same time, too much latitude must not be given to do as they like, neither should a fault be passed over if once it be seen—but there is wisdom and peace in a seeming blindness sometimes. I once observed to a lady, that she was fortunate in retaining the services of a girl for six years.

"It is all management," she replied. "Hannah attends to my comforts, does not waste, and performs her work well, at least, all

that I am likely to see, and lightens many a trouble for me; but if I were to remark to her about the general untidiness of the kitchen, or once open her dresser drawers, she would leave me to-morrow; what I don't wish to see, that I never will look at, and this is the secret of her long service with me, and of the good understanding between us." One would scarcely follow this rule in all cases, for as storms in nature sometimes clear the atmosphere from lowering clouds and stagnant vapours; so occasionally—not frequently—in the domestic regions they are of service, but with this difference, that as the lightning flash oftener purifies than injures, the flash of the tongue in angry speech, always creates a sudden wound; the fatal words of *notice to quit*, are quickly spoken, and as often quickly repented of.

"And angry pride stands by the gap,
Lest it should close again."

If a servant be really valuable and worth the retaining, it is best at the risk of a little self-sacrifice of pride, to try to win her to stay by all gentle means short of directly asking her, till her brooding anger be overpast; but beware—as all future comfort is dear—of, after a quarrel, making presents, be they ever so trivial. They will be accepted without doubt very eagerly, and among a girl's companions shown as proof of her mistress' repentance; and through their ignorant advice a spirit of opposition and independence is engendered. Within a fortnight of the end of the month, if it be desired for her to remain on, it is best to call her to a conference, not casually to speak to her as she is doing her work; but with the gravity of an Indian at a war council, open the conversation, you sitting, she standing, by asking her if it be still her wish to leave, if so, you have an opportunity of replacing her, but if not, and she is willing not to offend again thus in the same way, there can be no objection to her remaining if she will do her duty to the best of her ability; a few words like these generally bring matters to a conclusion, because if the girl is averse to remaining, she would be of no service, and it must be satisfactory to a mistress to know that in this line of conduct in herself, there can be no after regret at not having used the means to induce the girl's stay, however much the former hasty words might be repented of.

As long as the world lasts there must be servers and helpers, and between them and the class they serve, there can be neither equality nor fraternity. A mistress cannot be too kind to her domestics; at the same time, the line of demarcation between the two classes cannot be too strong. In Australia and America we

have an example of what a breach of this law would be in England, and yet thousands of young mistresses are rapidly bringing this scourge upon themselves by their own ignorance of all domestic duties.

A servant should look upon her mistress as one having a superior knowledge of household matters, and one able to pay for the helper's services ; to such, a domestic will generally render all respect. But, alas ! too often is it the case, that a daughter about to be married knows not one particle of cookery or house management, and frequently thinks her incompetence greatly to be boasted of ; and when she marries a man with two or three hundred a year, turns over all the management of the table and her domestic concerns generally to an ignorant girl, who, soon tired of the blame constantly heaped upon her head, gives sudden notice to leave, at a time (for things always do go by contraries) when there is no money to pay her wages. Then the lady rummages her wardrobe to give the girl a part equivalent for her money in dress, making up the remainder in cash as best she can.

This is no fancy sketch, it is frequently too true, and is half the secret of much of the tawdry finery with which girls are bedizened. From such mistresses they obtain characters with which they get other places, though they really have none of the valuable qualifications which every one hopes to find in a domestic.

There has been some uncertainty as to whether a mistress is bound to give a character to a servant or no.

The law, according to Lord Kenyon and Lord Tenderden, rules that if a character be given, it must be a true one ; but a master or mistress cannot be compelled to give any character at all. Yet if the slightest attempt at giving one be made it must be strictly truthful ; there must be no concealment of any grave error, as if the servant is dishonest, and a mistress knowing this, should in no way allude to it, to the lady inquiring particulars of her, and if the servant be taken by the lady in consequence of this character, and she should afterwards rob her new employers, it has been held that the person who gave such false character is liable to an action, to compensate for the entire loss, and, moreover, is liable to other punishment also.*

A mistress may know a girl to be dishonest, and yet would feel that she would rather do anything than cause an excitement in her house or neighbourhood, by endeavouring to prove the fact, which is difficult to do when a servant can dispose of her pilfering each time she is sent to church or on an errand ; in this case it is safest to decline giving a character at all.

* Statute 32, George III., cap. 56.

There is some comfort in knowing exactly what one should do under peculiar circumstances. But when a mistress, to gratify pique or feelings of revenge, objects to give a character to a generally deserving girl, then the act is unwomanly and unchristian and will be sure to bring its own punishment sooner or later. The same nature that would stoop to commit this offence would scarcely hesitate at crime, if the opportunity or the temptation came in the way.

CHAPTER V.

BOILING SALMON—FRYING FISH—REMARKS ABOUT BOILING MEAT—
SALTED MEAT—TO PREVENT MEAT FROM CURLING UP—SOUP
STOCK—FLAVOURING SOUPS—MEAT CAKES—RISSOLES—ONION
AND CARROT SOUP—TO BOIL ARTICHOKEs, TO COOK MACCARONI,
OR OTHER ITALIAN PASTES.

KEZIAH'S aptitude for learning cooking was great, she was born for the vocation ; hence, I had no trouble after the first three months, but, until this time the weariness of repeating the same processes over and over again, was almost insupportable, till I recollect that no one branch of my education had been perfected in so short a time, and that no trade could be learned in so short a period, so I took "heart o' grace," and went on, and in the end—prospered. Morsels of comfort came time by time, and with them my reward.

As each day's dinner progressed, I taught her, not only how each thing was to be cooked, but gave her the reason why such acts she was directed to do, were needful,—and that by any other process the cooking would be spoiled. For instance, in boiling salmon—I came into the kitchen one day, just in time to prevent her from putting it into cold water. "If you do this, Keziah, the fish will be colourless and tasteless, instead of being of the right flavour, and of a pink tint."

"An' if you please 'm, what can it matter?" she asked.

"Only this. If the water be cold when the fish is put in, it melts out the jelly or goodness of the salmon, and the colour is taken out just in the same way that stains are taken out of linen by placing them in cold water. Have only as much water as will just cover the fish ; when it is nearly boiling put in a lump of salt the size of an apple, and a wineglassful of vinegar, then put the

fish on the drainer, and put it into the water, let it simmer quickly up, then draw the fish-kettle back, so that the water is only just seen to move, and let it simmer in this way for quite twenty minutes, or if it be a large and whole salmon, then three quarters of an hour. You may know when it is done by looking at the bone, which then loosens itself from the fish, either at the head or tail.

“ Will you recollect that all fish must be put into very hot water, and never into cold. If you are going to fry it, after well washing, drying, and flouring each fish, or egging and bread-crumbing each, be sure to let the fat be boiling, and as it never shows that it is so, put in a bit of bread and you will see the fat boil up round it.

Remember never to boil meat or fish, it must only be simmered, and never put either into cold water, excepting you are going to make soup of the meat, then as you wish to draw out all the goodness of the meat of course you must then use cold water. Salted meats must have hot water just the same, but if they are very salt, as soon as the water has simmered over the meat for ten minutes, throw the water away and fill up the saucepan with boiling water from another saucepan. By this means the salt is extracted, and the juiciness of the meat is retained. Remember, too, that a joint which has small bones, as breast of veal, or breast or neck of mutton, or brisket of beef, the meat must be placed downwards in the saucepan, and the bones uppermost, then the meat will not curl up but will lie flat in the dish ; and also there will show no scum or blacks on it either from accident or carelessness. In roasting or baking beef, if a doubled piece of buttered paper be placed over the skin it will not shrink.”

The water in which fresh meat has been boiled must be thrown into a clean pan. The next morning the cake of fat, which will be on the top, carefully take off, and put in a clean tin strainer, or lay on a clean sheet of paper to absorb all moisture ; this fat put in a basin or preserve jar, into the oven and melted or clarified by the heat, (mutton but just boiled is the best and sweetest for making cakes.) The liquor then put to the bones of any joint and boiled in an iron saucepan for six or eight hours, and then strained through a colander, and put away till the morning ; the cake of fat, (which is useless,) taken off, reveals a *mass of jelly*, called by cooks, Stock. And this it was which made all our hashes, and stews, and curries so rich, without being gross, for as no fat entered into their composition they were wholesome as they were appetising.

It was great trouble to make Keziah attend to the boiling of

the bones ; at first it was a very common occurrence, that after the fat was taken off the stock, there was only coloured water underneath, instead of jelly, then the bones had to be returned to the saucepan, with the liquor, and boiled again. When the girl found there was no getting out of the trouble, and that if she neglected it one day, it must be done the next, for stock must be had, she made up her mind to do the thing properly, and thus lessened her trouble and my own.

Sometimes I found bits of onion and carrot and other vegetables among the bones, then I was displeased, she had been ill-taught by some one that all kinds of vegetables ought to go to form good soup, and rather triumphed in her way over me with this display of knowledge.

“ But vegetables must be put in, ma’am, to make good soup.”

“ That is true, Keziah, but there is a time for everything. If you boil the vegetable for eight or ten hours, you give a stale flavour to the soup, which is to me unendurable, and in which you cannot recognise the taste of a single vegetable. I always boil the vegetables, excepting onions and celery, beforehand.”

“ Remember every soup must have, more or less, a flavour of onions—in some cases, so little that it can scarcely be tasted, but yet it must lurk there. But it must be a fresh flavour, not that of dish water. We will have this onion soup to-day, and to-morrow we will have carrot soup, and the next day artichoke, then sago, then celery, then vermicelli.”

“ An’ then there’s mock turtle soup, an’ mongitoryn, an’ some other hard names that I’ve quite forgot.”

“ You mean mulligatawny, Keziah ; but these are expensive soups, and they would not suit me to have, so we must be content with seven or eight soups, flavoured differently each day. The stock for these must be made daily with the bones from the different joints which we have in the week, helped out with three-pennyworth of bones from the butcher’s.

“ With the roast beef to-day, we shall have carrots—some of these will do for the soup to-morrow—recollect that each day a portion of the carrots, or turnips, or artichokes, is kept back,—not all sent up to the table,—but put in the larder to flavour the soup with the next day. The carrots you will boil as I have told you before ; scrape them clean, and wash them well, but do not cut them, no matter how large they are ; if you do, the delicate flavour will be lost, and they will taste stale, put them into plenty of boiling water, with a lump of salt and a piece of dripping, let them

boil fast for two hours ; all the trouble you need to take is to see that they are kept boiling.

“ We will make some soup for to-morrow from the bone of mutton we had the day before yesterday ; there is enough left on it to make a hash for supper.”

“ There’s nuthin’ here, ma’am, to speak of, nuthin’ to make anybody’s meal.”

“ You shall see what I will do with it. There is at least a breakfast-cupful of scraps of meat, to which I must add one rasher of lean bacon, which you must mince together very small in the round bowl, and with the half round chopper, which hangs on yonder nail. Bring the bread and cut a thick round two inches deep, completely pare off the crust, which you may butter and put away to be eaten for your tea, before any other bread is cut ; now bring the clean tin colander, which I use only for crumbling bread through. I like to do this myself, because it requires the cleanest hands ; you see I break up the bread, and rub it through the holes, and it comes out quite fine, the few hard pieces which are left you may give to the birds. To this I add a grate of nutmeg, and a little pepper and salt, and a teaspoonful of flour. Mix the bread and spice together, get a handful of parsley, wash it in a little warm water, then in cold, and dab it dry in a clean cloth, now chop it small and mix it in with the bread, then to one cupful of meat add two of crumb mixture, then a table-spoonful or two of melted bacon fat, and as much milk—which will be very little indeed, to make into a mass ; this will divide into six small cakes, which I form with my hand, dip them in beaten egg, then in flour, and then fry them in plenty of boiling fat. I take them up carefully with a tin fish slice, and lay them on some clean paper to dry. Then remove *all* the fat from the pan, put in a teaspoonful of flour ; the pan is sufficiently hot to brown it, then a little salt and a small measure of water ; stir it well ; let it simmer, and strain it on a hot dish. Put the meat cakes on to this, and serve very hot, and these with some well-washed potatoes, roasted an hour in a hot oven, you see we shall have a hot and nice supper. Sometimes, Keziah, I add onions instead of parsley, and these are more savoury, and instead of cakes, I form them round like sausages, and then call them Rissoles. In the evening you must put on the small frying-pan quite clean, and fill it half full of dripping, and when it boils, dip your rissoles in beaten egg, put them in the pan and fry them of a light brown.”

“ It’s a comfort to know how to make a little go a great way,”

was Keziah's remark. "I am sure I should have thought this meat no account."

"Now for the bones for the soup. Every bit of fat must be taken off. This would spoil the soup. Divide the bones, but not chop them, as the marrow makes it greasy; put it on the fire in an iron saucepan with three quarts of cold water, add to it the bacon rind which was scraped and washed yesterday, the little bones which I cut out of the bacon, and a large blade of mace, let this boil for eight hours, then strain it through a colander, and in the morning, underneath the fat, which you must take off and throw away, you will find the delicious jelly with which you can make twenty different things that are nice, and which will also make the most delicious gravy for any purpose. To buy beef for gravies is a great waste. Remember this, my girl, never to waste the smallest trifle, all can be converted to something or other. The clippings and trimmings of fresh meat will go to make soup and gravies, the fat can be melted for dripping, which is so very useful in the family for frying with, because frying requires a very plentiful supply; and after it is done with for cooking purposes, it can be sold. The bones can be made into soup and gravy, and can afterwards be sold. The bacon fat saved, so as to be clean and white, will make excellent pastry. The pieces of bread, of which there is sometimes an unavoidable waste made at the table by persons who do not consume all that is given to them, can be made into excellent puddings."

"But then they've been pulled about by the fingers," Keziah quickly remarked.

"But you will recollect that the hands of ladies and gentlemen were much cleaner, perhaps, than those of the people who made the bread, and you must yourself have seen cooks make pastry with very dirty hands and nails, therefore clean bread can be used in a pudding. If one were to think of all the disagreeable handling which food undergoes before it comes to the table, puddings made from the pieces of bread are very dainty and clean by comparison."

"That's true, so they be, for I went once below our baker's shop, and I saw the man jumping in the dough with his feet."

"I think you dreamed that. But when I am more at leisure I will tell you a story of how a man got rich by putting to a profitable use the waste bread left from dinner tables."

"Thank you, ma'am, but couldn't you tell me now?"

"There is a time for everything, Keziah, and now is the time to make onion soup for to-day's dinner; ten minutes will suffice for it.

Peel three onions, and cut them into fine rings, chop them across so as to make them rather fine. Take as much of the jelly stock we made yesterday as will be necessary, and put it on to boil, add to it half a tumbler of milk. Now give me the dry toast that was left at tea last night. Observe that I butter it slightly on both sides, and cut it into small squares. When the stock boils, just add a teaspoonful of salt and throw in the onions, let them boil up quickly ; and in eight minutes, not longer, they will be cooked. Mix, in a basin, a teaspoonful of flour with a little cold water, take a little hot soup and mix with it, strain it into the saucepan, then add a bit of butter the size of a nutmeg, stir it up well till all is well mixed ; throw in the toast, put the soup over the fire for an instant, then throw it into the *hot* soup-tureen, and now serve it as quickly as possible."

The next day we had carrot soup ; two of the cold carrots that were left from the day previously were grated on a coarse grater, that is, the thick end of the carrot was held in paper, and the carrot grated, *not the long way*, but the short way, then with the back of a knife it was further pressed, then mixed with a little cold soup, some pepper and salt added to further separate it ; and then, when the soup was hot, the carrot was added to the whole, and simmered for two or three minutes, then the butter and flour added, and served, but without *toast*, unless there was any left from tea or breakfast.

The next day was a simple clear soup, made from jelly stock alone, flavoured with onion and a piece of the end of a refuse leaf of celery boiled in it for ten minutes ; but on this day we had Jerusalem Artichokes* for dinner. Some of these when cooked were put into a little milk and water, and laid away for our next use, dignified by some clever cook as Palestine soup.

Perhaps I had more trouble in teaching Keziah to cook this vegetable than any other, indeed it ended in doing it myself.

The artichokes must first be washed in tepid water to free them from dirt, then let them lie in cold water ; each one be pared roughly at first, with a sharp and pointed knife, and each one be instantly thrown into cold water *or it will turn black*, then a fresh pan of water must be had, and each be perfectly pared and all the spots picked out. Have a large saucepan of boiling water ready, in which a *table-spoonful of dripping* or fat of some kind and a lump of salt has been put. When the water is rapidly boiling, drain the

* This plant was first brought from Peru to Italy. In the latter kingdom it was called *Girasole Articucco*, the sunflower artichoke. This Italian name was soon converted into Jerusalem Artichoke.

artichokes, throw them into a clean cloth, dab them well, and then throw them into the boiling water, let them boil quickly for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, as they may be young or old. They must not be taken out of the water to drain till the instant they are needed, or they will turn black ; they may be either served whole with arrowroot sauce or melted butter over them, or they may be drained and mashed in a basin, with a wooden spoon ; a spoonful or two of milk and a piece of pork dripping or bacon fat to be mixed with them ; the basin be covered with a saucer and placed in a hot oven, till the instant of turning them out to send to table. The dripping will be better than butter for them. The reason that artichokes are often hard when cooked, and no amount of time seems to soften them, is—that they require very soft water of a peculiar kind, and that which fat alone can give, or else milk, which is too extravagant to be used by persons having small incomes. The same rule as to putting fat in the water must be observed with carrots, parsnips, artichokes, and celery. Boiled artichokes when cold and laid away in milk and water will not blacken, and for the soup, beat them fine in the milk and water, add a little salt, a piece of butter the size of a walnut, a teaspoonful of flour and a cupful of boiling soup ; mix it well together. Cut half a small onion very fine into the boiling soup, let it boil five minutes, then mix the artichoke with the other soup, let it *simmer* a minute, then serve with toasted bread, or strain it and add a tablespoonful of Italian paste or vermicelli or maccaroni cut small and previously boiled in boiling water for twenty minutes, then strained and added to the soup. Some cooks use the yolks of eggs and cream in Palestine Soup, but for digestion and wholesomeness the more simple way of making it is the best.

It is as well to say here, that if sufficient of the paste or the maccaroni or vermicelli be boiled for three days' consumption and laid by in cold water, it can be used at any time, as it remains soft ; but left out of water for half an hour it hardens. All these pastes for soup should be cooked by throwing them into plenty of boiling water, with a little salt, and a piece of butter the size of a nut, (bacon fat or pork dripping will serve equally well,) and be boiled for twenty minutes. Many persons will use milk instead of water, which only curdles, and is expense for nothing.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW A GREAT FORTUNE WAS MADE OUT OF BREAD CRUSTS.

THE first afternoon that Keziah saw me disengaged, she begged for the story of the man who got rich by caring for the crusts of bread, and as it was one that could not fail to delight the children, she was given a tea-cloth to hem, and was asked to join them to hear the following true tale :—

“ In Paris there was recently a man, called Père Chapellier, who picked out of gutters what he could find, and sold the articles he found there—old iron nails, and such things that no one owns, but which he could sell for a few pence. Being ashamed of this employment—for father Chapellier had been a soldier, and took pride in himself for having served his country, he had only resorted to it to keep himself from starving—an opportunity one day occurred of his entering a wholesale rag-gathering business, and becoming a rag-sorтер. This was one step in advance, so he thought, because here he could be private, and was not obliged to go into the streets. But alas ! for the poor man, the smell from the rags and bones was so dreadful that he was nearly poisoned, and was obliged to go to the hospital ! Of course after this he did not wish to go back, and, fortunately, while sick, he made the acquaintance of a man who promised to find him a place with a poultry-dealer.

“ Now what do you suppose he had to do ? ”

“ Why, kill the ducks and fowls, to be sure,” was Keziah’s ready answer.

“ Oh, no, not to kill them, but to keep pigeons alive.”

Here my little Allen reached up his glowing cheek to mine.

“ Tell me quick, mamma—quick ! quick ! ”

“ He had to fill his mouth with grain or pease and push them with his mouth into the young pigeons’ throats, for they would not eat but when they were hungry, and they did not get fat quickly enough to please their owner, and the poor Chapellier, after a little practice, had to feed from two to three hundred pigeons an hour, and for this labour he was paid 1s. 8d. a-day. Of course this did not satisfy him, so he left, and then took to eradicating a prejudice about poultry—it may be called deception —to earn his bread.

“ It seems that the feet of poultry and game, when freshly

killed, are brilliant and black, at least some of them are, but they turn of a leaden hue as they get stale. Now Chapellier pondered over this, and invented a varnish which, when used, kept the colour of the stale birds as fresh as the newly-killed ones. This deception succeeded ; the cooks and others bought second day's poultry for first day's freshly-killed, without finding out their mistake ; therefore the poultry was none the worse. As enormous quantities of poultry are sold in the French markets, our rag-gatherer made a great deal of money by his invention. The taste of wealth made him only the more ambitious. He sold his secret for forty pounds to a man who has since made his fortune, and Chapellier began to look about for some trade in which he could be sole master. He went to his old employer the rag merchant, and endeavoured to enter into partnership with him, but the man asked £2000, and this our schemer could not obtain. As he was standing in the warehouse the rag-gatherers came in, and he was struck by the number of pieces of bread they brought, which they could not sell to the rag-gatherer, and which had been given to them out of pure charity ; this, he observed, they carefully gathered up to take away. He asked them what they did with it, and ascertained that they sold them to private people for feeding rabbits and chickens. This was hint enough to a man determined to make his fortune. What these beggars and rag-gatherers did in a small way he determined to do in a large one, and the very day that the bright idea struck him, he hired a large room in a cheap neighbourhood and close by a shed, where he could place his donkey and cart, which he purchased on the same day. He then went to the different colleges and schools, and offered to buy all their waste bread, which these people had been in the habit of giving to the first beggar, or which they threw among their dust. His success with them was very great, so much as to induce him to monopolise all the waste bread of the taverns and cook shops in Paris, and he paid the rag-gatherers to bring all they could gather from private houses to him."

"Do you think the servants sold the waste bread, ma'am, to these men, because if they did, I daresay they made lots more pieces than the misses knowed of; for these pieces of bread do worrit a girl so, 'cos she can't eat 'em all ?"

It was very evident Keziah had been thinking what she should do with the odd corners and scraps which she dared not throw away.

"No, they did not sell them, the men were too cunning to pay for what they knew could be got for nothing ; so the servants did

not benefit, whatever the beggars might ; the master and mistress were the sufferers by these men being permitted to come near the servants. But listen to the story without further interruption. As soon as Chapellier had accumulated a sufficient number of pieces of bread, he appeared one morning in one of the most central markets of Paris, surrounded by a number of bags full of bread, and several empty baskets. Round his hat was a placard, 'BREAD-CRUSTS FOR SALE.' Numbers of the Parisian workmen keep pets of some kind, either dogs for amusement, or rabbits, or fowls for eating, and as Chapellier sold his crusts at 3d. the basketful, for this sum many of these creatures could be fed for a week ; so he soon had numerous customers. At the end of a month this clever man had doubled the £40 capital with which he commenced, and which he had obtained by selling his secret of painting chickens' legs. Four months after he had commenced the business he had no longer a donkey and cart, but three horses and three carts, collecting bread from a very wide district, and thus he soon accumulated a large fortune, then sold his business, and retired into private life.

"Chapellier was miserable without employment ; after a time he quitted his country home, returned to his old haunts, and invented a new industry, for the man who had bought his business was, from small inattentions and a frequent waste of time, losing his trade. In France, bread-crumbs are sold either white or brown, ready the one for frying, the other, when baked, pounded, and sifted, for sifting over fish and cutlets. It was as a manufacturer of bread-crumbs that Chapellier next established himself. He sold a quart piled up with the crumbs for sixpence ; this was cheaper than any one else could do, and the waste pieces from this process he disposed of to dog-fanciers and others.*

"The man sold his bread-crumbs so cheaply that his business rapidly increased ; he had very soon to employ waggons and horses, and then for a trifle he bought back his old business from his successor, who was idle and unthrifty. In the bread there were always two kinds, good and indifferent ; the best he selected to make baked crusts for soup, which is so much eaten in Paris. We toast bread and cut it in small squares, but there it is cut in larger and thicker pieces. So Chapellier set up ovens, which it is said are never cool, and which employ a number of men, women, and

* Real lovers of pet dogs never give them meat, because it makes their breath smell disagreeable, and renders them liable to disease. In France, bread crusts soaked in soup or in milk is given to them. In England, potatoes and gravy with a little salt, and mixed with crumbled bread.

children in the manufacture, though the bread is only the waste pieces, before this time thrown away. In baking, the crusts frequently get burned black, and this, too, is made useful ; children rasp it off, it is then powdered, sifted very fine, put into boxes, and sold to the chemists as charcoal tooth-powder.

“The warehouses of Chapellier are immense buildings, divided for each separate department of the business. In one place the waggons come in with the bread gathered from house to house, exactly as the boys in England gather coal ashes for making bricks. In another place workmen separate the pieces, placing on one side those suitable to feed many a hungry family, on the other, those destined for animals.

“Then there is the cutting them into shape, the baking and the sorting, the rasping, and finally arranging the perfect crusts in proper bags, after which process they are ready for sale. Then there is the pounding and sifting through coarse sieves the brown pieces used in the cooking of cutlets and fish. The black raspings are further powdered and sifted through silk sieves.

“And lastly, in a separate part of the building this once despised bread, now greatly changed in appearance and packed in dainty paper bags, is sold in large or small quantities. There are also carts standing ready to be filled with the commodity, which is delivered at the different eating and soup houses, where the numerous workmen of Paris take their meals.

“Throughout the establishment the greatest order and cleanliness prevails, for the master is always present, and his eye, be sure, does more work than both his hands. He is by no means a stern man, he does not find much fault, but discharges the offender upon a second fault, after once reproofing ; he often jokes and laughs, but rules by good temper.

“Père Chapellier has made a great deal of money, and invested it so that it brings him in many thousands a-year, and of his riches he spends liberally in charity. Now, Keziah, recollect what economy, observation, and industry can do. He did not lie late in bed, nor waste his time in gossiping, and he must have had a horror of waste, or this way of making money would never have occurred to him.

“This man has done far more good in the world, though born so poor that none could well be poorer, by the exercise of the faculties God gave him, than thousands who enjoy a fortune as soon as they are born. He has not only enriched himself till he scarcely knows how rich he is, but by his means thousands of people are fed on wholesome food at the cheapest rate, and hundreds of men, women,

young girls, and children are put in a way of getting their bread honestly, and that by gathering up what others throw away, and by observation and tact to put to use this hitherto despised refuse.

"I do wish I could find some way of using the bits o' bread, for they do worrit me so," was Keziah's remark.

"You, Keziah, often make more pieces than are necessary, by not eating up the remains of a loaf before you cut another."

"But, ma'am, there's the top of the loaf and the bottom too, which is never eaten in the dining-room ; and then, when there's company there's so many little pieces, which it goes agen me to throw away, and I can't eat 'em all ; I wished Mr Chapellier lived nearer here, I'm sure he could do much good with 'em."

"Suppose we begin a manufactory on a small scale. Collect all the pieces for me to-morrow morning when I come into the kitchen ; I mean those which have been left, as you say, from the company over night, for in the nursery the pieces shall be made use of, for none need be made."

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT TO DO WITH THE PIECES OF BREAD—HOW TO MAKE STALE BREAD NEW—CROUTONS FOR CHEESE—BREAD PUDDING—BREAD FOR STUFFING—BAKED AND SIFTED BREAD FOR BROWNING—BREAD CRUMBS FOR GAME—CLARIFIED BUTTER—HOW TO FRY SOLES—CRIMPED PARSLEY.

THE morrow came, and when I went into the kitchen a large plateful of pieces of bread met my eye. I laughingly said,

"If you cannot eat all the pieces, Keziah, you will have a little extra work to render them useful. In the first place, here is enough bread in one piece to serve you and nurse a whole day, it is almost a loaf ; where could it have been to have escaped my notice ?"

"If you please, ma'am, 'twas left in the nursery cupboard, and nurse didn't see it ; 'tis a week old, but 'tisn't sour."

"Cut it in two, get the milk basin of clear cold water, dip each piece quickly in the water, and put each on a separate clean plate in the oven if very hot ; leave it there for half an hour, but don't shut the oven door."

This was done, and I turned to the other pieces ; one, the crumb of a very stale roll. This had been one of the hidden stores, but had been untouched and unharmed. I pulled it into six pieces, dipped them quickly in the water and laid them on the edge of one of the plates in the oven.

Some other of the larger pieces went to make stuffing for the veal we were to have that day for dinner ; they were put into a basin, a *very little* *boiling water* was poured on, and a plate put on the basin, so that the steam softened the bread without making it wet. This was afterwards mixed with a teaspoonful of flour and a little nutmeg, then a tablespoonful of bacon fat, some finely chopped parsley, and lemon thyme, or dry winter savoury ; and I then made it into a ball, with a little milk, for the centre of a fillet of veal ; I never used suet in stuffings, and very rarely an egg, the milk and flour were sufficiently binding.

There were now left some pieces which would serve for a pudding in the nursery. These were soaked in hot milk ; a little ground allspice and sugar added, and then well beaten up into a stiff mass ; a layer of this was placed at the bottom of a pie-dish, then a layer of slices of apples, and a spoonful of sugar, then again a layer of apples was on the top on which was placed four or five bits of butter, each no bigger than a pea, then some moist sugar was slightly sifted over, and it was baked two hours. I used to vary this pudding by using, instead of apples, a quarter of a pound of Sultana raisins, well washed in *warm water* and dried, then laid in alternate layers with the bread only ; in this instance the bread came on the top, but neither butter nor sugar were omitted, as this made a nice brown glaze, and looked tempting.

It was nearly twenty minutes before Keziah took the bread from the oven, and feeling it, exclaimed,

“ Why this is new bread only a little toasted ; well I never. How nice. What must I do with them nice little pieces of roll ? how beautiful they have browned.”

“ They must be sent to table to eat with the cheese.”

“ Well this beats Mr Chapellier ; but here’s all these little crumbs, I ‘spose I may throw ‘em to the birds ?”

“ No, no ; you will put them on the plates in the oven till they are of a fine bright brown, which will be in a few minutes, then get the pestle and mortar, and when the crumbs are hot and crisp pound them well, sift them through a fine tin strainer, and put them into a dry pickle bottle or any other wide-mouthed bottle that has a well-fitting cork, and keep them on the chimney piece

in the kitchen in a dry, warm place. Now I think all the bread is disposed of."

"But what am I to do with these brown crumbs?"

"They are to be used for sifting over fried fish, or fried chops—not steaks, mind—over boiled calves' head, and over ham and bacon when the rind is taken off. Bread crumbs browned are served also with partridges and pheasants, but then these must be rubbed through a colander, and have a little clarified butter rubbed into them before they are browned."

"What is clarified butter, ma'am?"

"Butter melted before the fire or in the oven for a minute or two; there is neither milk, water, nor flour mixed with it."

"I've seen cooks with such dirty hands grating bread crumbs," was Keziah's next remark.

"No doubt you have, and many people do not object to eat stuffing and forcemeat balls made by these dirty cooks, but would very much object to eat waste bread made into stuffing when only the clean fingers of visitors have touched it, for nobody bites the bread."

"Perhaps you'll tell me how I'm to fry soles and use these brown crumbs, ma'am?"

"You will not recollect, Keziah, but I will tell you. Clean the fish well by cutting them a little lower down than the fishmongers do, and with finger and thumb pull out the dark piece you will find there. If the soles have not been skinned you will have to cut the dark skin just across at the tail, and then pull the skin upwards from the tail to the head. The white side remains unskinned. Then wash them well and wipe them very dry. Flour them, and lay them on paper, so that it may absorb all moisture. Afterwards put half a pound of dripping into a clean frying-pan. (Remember this quantity will fry six soles, but you must have no less for two fish.) Put it over a clear but not fierce fire, and when the fat boils, which you can see by throwing in a piece of bread, lay in your fish with the skinned side downwards. Two soles should fry at one time. Do not shake the pan nor touch the fish for three minutes. Then by putting the knife under it—if it lies stiff over the knife—turn it over to the other side—in two minutes the fish will be done. Take it up with a fish drainer on to a clean sheet of paper, that it may absorb the fat. When all the fish is fried, sift over the powdered brown crumbs—which will make the fish perfectly dry. For you must recollect that fish is ill fried if it be in the least greasy. There was a time when I thought nothing but lard or oil must be used for frying—it was •

mistake—dripping is equally good, provided only the fish be made quite dry before sending them to table.

“Crimped parsley is very good eating with either boiled or fried fish. You must pick the parsley from the stems, wash it in warm water, then in cold, dab it dry in a clean cloth ; then after the fish is fried and the dripping is thrown into a pan of clean warm water for use a second time, wipe out the pan while it is hot, so that no grease can be seen ; throw in the parsley ; stir it in the pan over the fire, but not too close to it—in three minutes it will be green and crisp.”

“I’ll try to recollect it, ma’am, but fear I shall forget.”

“When you have fried fish once or twice it will not be difficult, and you will always remember, *practice makes perfect.*”

CHAPTER VIII.

USELESS ANGER—SERVANTS’ MANNERS—BILLS OF FARE—ONE REASON
WHY AN OVEN WILL NOT BAKE—HOW TO MANAGE IT—HOW TO
COOK WITH IT—TO MAKE A HASH, A CURRY, A MINCE—TOASTS
FOR MINCE—WHY MEN ARE FREQUENTLY CROSS—HOW AN ESTATE
CAN WASTE AWAY.

LIKE all servants and many mistresses, Keziah was very forgetful. Day after day the greatest vigilance on my part was necessary. Sometimes she was inclined to be restive or obstinate. I ever found that remonstrance availed nothing ; that to be vexed and out of temper only made her my mistress. When a girl I had often read the morals of Epictetus* with more attention and remembrance than I had supposed at the time. I had found the book in my father’s library, having the appearance of being well read, for it was an edition of 1697. And when I was inclined to be angry the following lines always occurred to me :—

“Suppose you call your servant, he’s at play ;
Or when he’s present, minds not what you say ;
And is the quiet of your soul perplex’d
At this ? *He gets the better if you’re vex’d,*
He grows your master while he can torment.
Give not such power to the vile negligent.”

* The Emperor Antoninus thanked the gods that he could collect from the writings of this author sufficient wisdom to rule his country with honour, and his daily life with advantage to himself and others. Epictetus lived in the first century of the Christian era.

If one would only consider that, with brains trained by discipline of learning and reading, how soon and how frequently we forget many things which should be remembered, we should have more forbearance with our servants. A young woman of twenty comes into a house as cook—knowing as much about her duties as a child—for like a child she knows how to spoil things and “how not to do it.” And she is rapidly or slowly told, as the case may be, all that will be required for dinner; and as for the necessary sauces which should accompany the meats, she has never before heard of them. One cannot but wonder how she gets on as well as she does, although her “get on” is nothing but a series of disappointments to her unfortunate and perhaps equally ignorant mistress. There is no royal road to cooking, to management, or to the acquisition of a retentive memory. All must have teaching and practice.

Mistresses will find it greatly to their comfort if they will write out every day a bill of fare of dinner, no matter how few articles for this meal there may be. When they are written down they are impressed on the girl’s memory, if she can read, if not some one must read it for her. I found it of great use to say,

“There are three, four, five, or six things (as the case might have been) to be cooked to-day”—but even for my own satisfaction I often found a reference to the bill of fare for dinner frequently necessary; for with the numerous cares of a family, and the many demands there are upon a mother’s time especially in the morning, and with a two o’clock dinner, my memory often failed me, which an instant’s reference to the written paper restored. Five minutes sufficed for writing out this, which saved me much weariness.

For all my little cookeries, whether hashes, minces, curries, or stewed steak or chops, I never used saucepans. To be always looking into these was apt—in American parlance—to *rile* Keziah’s temper, who, on the whole, kept these articles tolerably clean, but yet all the little *messes*—not only required excessive cleanliness, but also a moderated degree of heat which only an oven could give. All hashes, curries, stews, minces, and apple sauce, were placed in pie or baking dishes, and a flat dish placed on the top of each, kept the articles moist and prevented their burning. Let it not be imagined that my oven or the grate to which it was attached was one of the bran new-fangled kind. It literally was, as I heard one of my brightest cooks call it—“a rascal of a range”—for it could cook everything with little fire, but was altogether a shabby, shattered affair without a boiler, for that it will be remembered helped us to drink the black beetle water. The back was bricked, but space was left for the hot air to penetrate round, and

thus keep a dish warm, over what had once been the escape hole for the steam. The check of the range was fixed by a brick, so that on the oven side no great waste of coal could take place, as the fire could be only large enough to roast a joint of meat—or on the other side of the *check* a fire was lighted only when fish had to be fried, or a ham to be boiled, or when any extra fire was needed.

The small oven did its work well at all times, provided that the tiny aperture at the back was kept free from the fine dust of the ashes, which would settle there and become an impenetrable mass, through which no heat could penetrate.

This one little trouble, among many others, upon which depends the comfort or the progress of greater things, I could never get properly done unless I made Keziah every morning rake it out in my presence. She was no better in this respect than all the unmanageable cooks that had been in my service. It was no trouble to see to this, but it was quite certain that the cooking would be spoiled by the oven being cold, if it were not done. Half the cooking ranges in the kingdom that "won't bake" may be made to do so by attending to this little matter. The large, unmanageable and formidable affair called a kitchen poker, is useless for the purpose, a small, and perhaps worn-out bedroom poker, or crooked but strong iron rod, is the best to use for raking out the fine ash.

A great deal has been said about the indigestibility of baked meats—and with truth; but it is not because they are baked that indigestion comes from eating them, *it is because while baking the oven door has been shut*, and the steam arising from the meat is burnt by the heat and is absorbed again by the joint or other food. The first ten minutes after the meat is first put in, the oven door should be closed, and afterwards be opened half an inch. The ventilation in the oven door is a delusion, it is not sufficient. To put water in the baking tin is of no use, and it soddens the meat, which there is no occasion to mount on a meat stand, but placed in a simple flat baking tin, is all that is needed. By cooking the joint in this way, the gravy is retained more uniformly in the meat, and all dust and cinders are kept out of the dripping. Flour the meat an hour before it is to be served, then it will brown nicely. To make the gravy, take up the meat, put it on an old dish on the outside top of the oven, and cover it with a dish cover. Pour off all the fat which is in the bottom of the tin, leaving the brown gravy behind, mix a small teaspoonful of flour into the gravy, and add a cupful of boiling water. Set the tin on the fire and let the gravy simmer, then strain it on to the *very hot dish* in

which the meat is to be served, then put the meat on with two spoons; *never stick a fork into it*. The object of putting flour into the gravy is that all fat is absorbed by it, and it thus becomes more digestible. Almost any quantity of gravy may be made, a desirable adjunct in a family of children. If the gravy should not be brown enough, as it ought to be, heat a *long-handled* iron spoon, put a pinch of brown sugar in it, burn it and pour a little *boiling water* on it or stir it into the *simmering* gravy while on the fire, and then strain the gravy.

Colouring for gravies and soups should be kept ready for use. Take a deep tin can that will hold a pint—it can be bought for threepence anywhere—oil the sides and bottom of this, and put in two table-spoonfuls of water and a quarter of a pound of moist sugar, put it in the oven, where it will burn into a black, but liquid cake, (watch that it does not boil over in the process of burning;) now add a little water and a spoonful of salt, when wanted for use—a drop or two will be sufficient.

For a hash, whether of beef or mutton, I cut the meat very thin—that near the knuckle of mutton makes a hash delicious—and take away all fat; then I floured the meat on both sides, and shook the pepper lightly over, then laid the meat in layers in a pie-dish; when it was three parts full, I cut a large onion in four and stuck a clove in each piece, and put them on the top of the meat; over the whole I poured the gravy left from the joint the day before, but through a tin strainer, to remove the fat which, it must be remembered, *spoils all cookery*, when it is *improperly* used, as it would be in all hashes and stews, (though the addition of a little bacon fat is always an exception.) I then put a flat common dish that would fit the pie-dish over, (the hollow side towards the meat,) and then baked it *three hours*. When there was neither gravy nor stock—being without the latter was a thing of the rarest occurrence—I mixed a table-spoonful of flour into a batter, poured boiling water on it sufficient to set it, mixed in a piece of bacon fat the size of a walnut, and a few drops of browning, then strained the whole over, and baked it the same time. Instead of the leathery meat one is accustomed to see under the name of hashed mutton, here was a rich gelatinous mass, free from fat and all that could render it hurtful, and made appetising without expensive sauces, which, like wine and spirits, make a hole in a meagre purse.

A curry was made thus—but without any pretensions to make it resemble an Indian curry (which no two people ever agreed in commending when partaking of it out of India):—I had onions cut

into thin rings, and put into boiling bacon fat, or pork dripping if I had either, in preference to other kinds, and a little salt. I found the nicest way of doing this was by using an empty preserve-jar or old basin ; but it can only be so done when the oven is very hot, otherwise a small frying-pan is equally good, and the onions fried over the fire. When these were sufficiently brown they were turned into a strainer to take way the fat. The meat was then cut into small thick pieces, the size of nuts. I then mixed one table-spoonful of curry powder with half the same measure of flour, and some grated nutmeg ; mixing this together with a spoon, I rolled the meat in it. I then chopped finely a rasher of toasted bacon, or any pieces of bacon however small, that had been left from breakfast, and of which not a scrap was ever wasted, although it was never placed *at breakfast* a second time before my husband after it had been once cooked, but it did appear again, and was eaten with relish, when we had roast veal or fowl, or veal cutlet. But there were often pieces left which could not be called rashers, these were carefully put by for curries. When the meat, bacon, curry-powder, flour, and nutmeg were well mixed together, I put the fried onions on the top, then some jelly, stock, or gravy, *not to make it too moist*, then covered it over with a dish and baked it three hours, then served it on a flat dish.

The rice, which is always eaten with curry, and which should be sent to table on a separate dish, was a trouble to Keziah, for the reason that it was so simply cooked. The attention which it required as to time was just what she would not heed—it ended by doing it myself. I washed four ounces of rice three times in boiling water, to take off the fusty taste, then in a quart of fast boiling water, which had a table-spoonful of salt in it, I threw the rice, making it boil up very quickly. In twenty minutes I had it strained through a colander, and the *steam all shaken out*, then it was instantly served. By these means every grain of rice stood separately, and it was not then the sodden mass one is accustomed to see. The art here lies in having salt and water, in the exact measure, of fast boiling water, in making it boil fast after the rice is in, in straining it at the proper time—for a minute over will spoil it—in shaking the steam out of it, and in serving it the *moment it is cooked*.

For a mince, and minced mutton is equally as good as veal, every scrap of meat can be cut from a bone, be minced fine in a round bowl and half-circular chopper, then floured, and a little nutmeg grated over. If there was any melted butter left from a dinner, (it would keep very sweet for a week,) this was used for minces by adding a little milk to it and beating it up in a *basin*,

then stirring in the meat and placing *an old plate over the top*, and baking it in the oven for half an hour, it turned out a delicious mince. If there was no cold melted butter, a little was added to the milk, and the meat having been floured, sufficiently thickened it. A slice or two of dry toast was often left from breakfast, which I put in a paper-bag for use when wanted : and dipped in cold water, then laid upon an old plate in the oven, it came out new and crisp, and well adapted for snippets round the mince.

Let no one imagine that all this using up of food is meanness or stinginess, it is no such thing ; it is using and not abusing God's gifts. People buy diet-bread and rusks, and pay dearly too ; and yet, perhaps, many could not at all fancy eating good bread in this way. It only requires the mistress's eye, the wife's care, to keep all these things as free from dirt as they can be in a pastrycook's shop or elsewhere. Only where things cost much, there is a tendency to like them best, but a small income gives no choice in the matter ; and if one would obtain comfort—like happiness, it lies within one's-self to make it—when a hard-working husband, whether he be mechanic, artisan, clerk, or master, is cross or sulky on his return from his employment, let not the wife fancy it is all his temper ; let her look to her own shortcomings. The man has been all day working under the eye of another, or the curb of his own conscience, or, in the aspiration of his pride or ambition to be foremost in his work, he has been obliged to work neatly, deftly, and with economy as to his materials. He returns to see unthrift, untidiness, and all their train of attendants, in the management of his wife ; more glaring to him from the neatness and order he has been obliged to exercise through the day, or what from regular and long training, has become habitual and necessary to his own sense of respectability. What wonder such a man becomes taciturn, or seeks society in the bar-parlour of the tavern, or in its less secluded accommodation ?

I once knew a gentleman with many hundreds a year income, who could not endure to see even the crumbs from the table wasted, and his wife had perforce to set up chickens to eat up the pieces which would be made, and which there were no children to eat ; and if bestowed on beggars, the first gap in the hedge received them. His wife asked him what could be the cause of his excessive watchfulness over the waste of such small things.

"In my boyhood's days," he replied, "my father's estate vanished imperceptibly through want of care in small matters. I have seen whole stale loaves, broken rolls, lumps of bacon, and pieces of meat, which properly managed would have fed us children and the servants for a week, go to the pigs, and given to the animals

instead of their own proper food. My mother was an invalid, and the housekeeper, to keep peace with the servants, connived at this waste. My mother happily died before my father, and at his death six children were penniless.

“After these days I ate the hardest, stalest crusts with relish, and so can others who are hungry. The beggars at the door are not half so famished as many we see passing in the street with good clothes on their backs. There would not be so much poverty if the poorer classes did not waste the little they have, and the rich gave more discriminately.”

“And so this was George’s story,” said his wife. “I wondered very much one day why our bread bill was increased, and yet no increase in the family, and there were no pieces of bread to be found. After the departure of my servant, and before the other came, I was poking into corners, and was led to open the flue-door under the washing copper. This was full of stale and mouldy bread, which even choked up the flue. This circumstance it was which led me to set up chickens, though I did not tell my husband my reason for doing so. I have since wondered the girl did not burn the bread, and so get rid of it; but with all servants waste, they have a superstition about bread: they will not often destroy it, but they will make pieces, cut new bread and leave the stale, cut the crust and leave the crumb, or the reverse, and think this no destruction.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE PUSSEL 'EMS—THE UNIVERSAL MALADY—HOW TO MEET DIFFICULTIES, TOIL, TROUBLE, WORRY—THE FORM OF A MINISTERING SPIRIT—
—A RAILWAY COMPANION—AN EASTERN APOLOGUE—THE VISIT—
BLUE POTATOES—CARDS FOR THE KITCHEN VERY DESIRABLE.

KEZIAH'S memory seemed to get weak as she grew older. She could now read and write tolerably well, much better than when she first came, as it had been my practice to hear her read selected chapters from the Bible on Sunday nights, just as my children did, and occasionally to write copies. One evening of her early days, after I thought she had been much impressed with what she had been reading, she startled me by saying,

“I’m very fond of reading the Pussel 'ems, ma’am.”

“The Pussel 'ems, Keziah! that’s not fit reading for Sunday nights,” thinking she meant riddles.

"I thought 'twas, ma'am, because they's in the Bible," and, turning over the leaves, she pointed to the Psalms, and pronouncing the word as three syllables, behold "the Pussel 'ems!"

I set down the rising laugh by making her properly pronounce the word, and said, "Don't mind the letter P, call it 'Salms."

"That's funny," was her next remark; "my father tell'd me I should never get on if I didn't mind my P's and Q's."

This kind of conversation died out as time went on, and Keziah became more retiring in her manners and speech, and lost much of her country dialect. She became a very regular attendant in the afternoon service, but in the winter endeavoured to go to the evening service as well; for in the summer she and the nurse were allowed to go for a walk, but in the winter the nurse preferred to stay at home.

After a while Keziah was seized with an infirmity of temper, coupled with loss of memory, which seemed irremediable; for her pettishness she was always sorry and penitent, but her memory failed her in her cooking, and always in the little things that made its perfection. Still I bore with her, thinking she was not well, for she had been listless since her last return from her home at Nupton, where she went occasionally from Saturday till Sunday night, for we had cold dinner on a Sabbath. She was much in her own room at unreasonable times, at which I was greatly puzzled, till I observed that her fingers were frequently inky, when a new light seemed to dawn upon me.

"Who have you been writing to, Keziah?"

"My mother, ma'am."

Still the fingers continued inked.

"You seem to write very frequently to your mother," I observed.

Keziah blushed, but said nothing. The girl had found a lover, that was quite clear; that was the reason of my old troubles returning upon me again, of my being so often obliged to remind her of her shortcomings. But still I was unwilling to bring things to a crisis—I thought it was an incipient fever that would pass away, and so I went on, being kind where I should have reproved; giving way when firmness was needed; and thus no long time was needed to convert the girl into becoming my mistress, and a tyrant to boot. Keziah knew her power, knew how reluctant I should be to give her warning, and thought she could go to a greater length of the tether without serious reprimand.

I have ever found that with any difficulty, either close or at a distance, the best way is to grapple with it at once; to beat about the bush is to torture one's-self.

“ Tender handed, touch the nettle,
And it stings you for your pains;
Grasp it with the boldest mettle,
And it soft as silk remains.”

Keziah was just now the nettle in my path ; however softly I spoke to her, however seemingly blind to her faults, I felt a perpetual sting, though varied in its intensity by the occasion which called it forth. That the girl must leave me soon I knew for a certainty, and it was best to be prepared for it.

One evening I spoke to her about her general carelessness, and said I supposed she was tired of the place.

“ If you please, ma’am, I would rather leave, I’m very sorry, ma’am, but my mother wants me at home.”

So this was the end of all my teaching ; my troubles were to begin again. I was wrathful, silently wrathful, no doubt of it, my temper was rising, and I was nursing it to keep it warm. There were two things which always helped me over my difficulties if I could only command my temper sufficiently long to think. One was to cast my trouble upon the One whose care is ever over us ; the other was to get away from home for a few hours. In this case I got away first, and went by rail to visit a friend. A railway journey has always power to soothe my mind. I can think better in rapid movement.

Everybody must have felt some time or other how pertinaciously some sentence or words of a song will lay hold of one’s mind ; mine was now held fast by the words :—

“ And make us ministering spirits.”

Over and over again the sentence rose in my mind till I was forced to think of its meaning, and to ponder upon the high privilege of becoming a ministering spirit. So dreamily the thought wove itself into imagining the shape in which such a spirit might manifest itself. It surely must come in human form with help for our needs ; but its humanity must not be too exalted nor too grand for our intercourse ; and thus one thought led to another till it occurred to me that each of us could be “ a ministering spirit,” at least the helpers of each other, whether we instructed the ignorant, clothed and fed the needy, or consoled the afflicted, and that this was the work more especially given to women to do ; and if from a sense of toil or weariness it was put aside, it became a sin of omission equally censurable with a sin of commission. Then Keziah returned to my mind, and my heart sickened at the recollection of the tedious trouble I once had in teaching her. Then I thought of a governess’s life, of the duties “ never ending, still renewing,”

and again I took heart. Others there were who must still pursue a weary life, with no loving voice, no smile to cheer them in their rugged way. Thus many accomplished and even self-educated girls of gentle lineage or noble ancestry were plodding to obtain their daily bread, while I with a wealth of love surrounding me, and an income, which was ample for my wants, poured into my lap without any care of mine, was repining because the young girl whom I had educated for my own comfort was about to leave me, and to take her place among the world's thinkers. Viewed in this light, what a halo surrounded my future work. What I had taught Keziah I could teach others. I had taught her how to have comfort on small means, how to save and utilise every household matter, how to cook to insure good digestion, and showing that what could be done with a moderate income could in a degree be managed with a pound a week. As occasion needed, I had written out a number of recipes * for Keziah, with the manner and time of their cooking; these she had carefully preserved, and they would do her good service wherever she might be. Still, with all these consolations, my heart sank within me at the trouble I should have in going over the same ground again. "So soon as they have learned then they go," was my audibly breathed reflection.

An old gentleman, with the most benevolent countenance I had ever seen, looked up at me as I uttered these words, and said,

"Yes, madam, those whom the gods love die young."

"I was not thinking of the dead," I replied, "but of the living, I was thinking of the servants."

"Ah! it is the old story," he exclaimed, "as soon as you have taught them they want to marry or to better themselves. Well, it is natural that they should. I suppose you were glad to be emancipated from school duties, and to have a lover, and to be married, and play your part in the world, and so do they. But in my opinion it should be deemed a great privilege, a great gift, when one of your sex is endowed with ability to teach young girls how to make happy homes, and to become careful wives and mothers. It is a great happiness to walk the daily path of life in imparting knowledge to the minds of the ignorant, and receiving the gratitude of one's fellow-creatures and the blessing of God. So do not be downhearted, dear madam. The work is placed before you by your Creator, take it up, and fight the good fight manfully."

* These recipes will be found in the Appendix to this volume.

"But the servants are not grateful," I replied.

"How can you tell that? The present time is not all time. A servant may leave you, perhaps in anger or disgrace, but after a time she is placed in a position where your counsel, your advice and example, your teachings, are her salvation; you have sown the seed where no flower bloom meets your eye, but it blossoms sooner or later, and so with the girl. Is there no gratitude in her heart then, think you? Yes, her thankfulness is heard in heaven, and blessings descend upon you or yours, though all about her has been long forgotten.

"As to gratitude, are we thankful for our daily blessings? We fly unto God in our trouble, but in the time of prosperity He is far from our remembrance. Besides, others' fashion of gratitude may not be as ours. It is related that Abraham once offered hospitality to a stranger unacquainted with the Israelitish form of giving thanks, and he sitting down at meat without asking the customary blessing, Abraham arose and drove him from the tent. As the latter was returning full of ire, a voice arrested him,

"Have I not borne with thy unthankfulness for more than seventy years? canst thou not endure thy brother's failing for one brief hour?"

A gentleman here got into the train and hailed my Mentor by a name well known to me as one who was constantly gathering little human outcasts into shelter, giving them warmth and instruction, and calling the communities Ragged Schools. Every blessing be upon him, and such like him, who are indeed

"God's ministering spirits."

Arriving at my destination, I went to the waiting-room to the person in attendance, to ask her if she knew of a servant. My eye was caught by the Scripture texts hung in the room—all thanks be to the benevolent projector of the idea, they carry hope, or consolation, or warning to many a sad heart. As my thoughts rested upon these, others of a more worldly kind intruded; but I hastened to my destination, where I arrived just in time for an early dinner. My friend, Mrs Headfort, a martyr to depressing indigestion, remarked that she had a new servant, who felt inclined to resent any interference in her especial domain, therefore she was not quite sure that the dinner would be presentable, as this was the first day of her duties. That dinner of all others will never be effaced from my memory. The veal cutlet came up in one immense piece, white and leathery-looking; the potatoes were all of a bluish tinge, some positively blue; and the greens the

colour of seaweed and equally as tough. Mrs Headfort looked frightened.

"What can the girl have done to the potatoes?" she exclaimed.

"But the greens and the meat are equally bad," I said.

"Oh, but that I am used to. Has she put poison in the potatoes?"

"Not that," I replied. "But as you wash at home, it is very possible that she has boiled up the blue-bag with them." This proved to be correct. Our dinner was untasted. We regaled off the tart and other sweets, and I listened to a long list of grievances about the servants.

"But why not attend to those household matters yourself," I asked. "It is no wonder you suffer from indigestion if you touch greens and meat cooked in the way I saw them to-day. It is enough to give constant employment to a doctor, and yet be always a sufferer."

"You see I never was brought up to do these things, and I know nothing about them; and William always dines in town, excepting Sundays, and then he scarcely eats anything but pastry and cheese. Hunter, the pastrycook, sends us in the pies, or whatever we may have in that way. I am not a good manager like you, and I can't learn. I am too old now. Besides, to go pushing about among pots and pans, and poking one's nose into every corner, I hate it! I am no cook. I give a cookery book to my servants, and expect they will follow the rules."

"But then those books are for those who know how to do simple things, not for girls who are ignorant of the first rules for cooking," I remarked.

"The servants tell me this. They say that the books don't mention whether boiling or cold water is to be used, or how long the things will take to cook, and I can't tell them. One must be early taught to do these things. It is a pity we cannot learn cooking before we marry. I am sure my husband would stay more at home if I knew how to get him comfortable little suppers. I wish all the time I wasted in illuminating texts of Scripture had been spent in *illuminating instructions for household comfort.*"

"It is never too late to learn anything," I said. "You can yet be able to accomplish all you desire if you give your mind to it."

"Then you must please help me, Mrs Wynter, I have heard of your skill in household matters, and really do wish to learn to be useful."

I promised to write out some instructions, but warned her that

she had better discharge her present cook and get a teachable girl and so both work together. The conversation turned upon other matters. I went over the house, observed all the charmingly neat arrangements—for my friend had not been twelve months married. In every room there were several illuminated texts, all exquisite finished, and all very well in their place and desirable to have. But in the kitchen there were none, not a single moral axiom was there.

Mrs Headfort's suggestion about *illuminating* instructions for household comfort did not fall unheeded on my ear, and the passages of Scripture which I had seen in the railway station that morning helped my fancy, in imagining the benefit that girls able to read, might derive from cards hung in the kitchen on which general directions were printed for cooking meats, soups, fish, game and poultry; for boiling vegetables and for making pastry, with the eggs and sugar necessary to be used for each half pint or pint of milk, and for sundry other matters connected with domestic comfort. The more I endeavoured to get rid of this thought the more persistently it would recur, till there was no putting it from me, and what had been almost a passing idea, came to shape itself into a possibility, and at last into something to be desired.*

I reflected how, when a child, I had seen cooks—so called—thumb a cookery book, puzzled where to find what they sought and having to wade through an index, spelling out almost every word; and how often when the nurse was as ignorant as herself, had been when a child enticed into the kitchen by a promise of something sweet, if I would read out some recipe for the cook and when I had read it through without pause or stop till I came to the end, breathless, I was sure to look up on a puzzled face, and hear the exclamation,

“Drat it, I can't make nothing on't, head nor tail.”

The vivid recollection of this returned to me in full force as I thought the matter over, and then felt it would be useful if servants observed in their kitchens as much care for their instruction as they continually saw in other rooms of the house to remind their mistresses and others that “God is ever present,” or any equally undeniable assertion. For themselves, these richly scrolled texts could never be meant.

“Lor', ma'am,” said one of my helps—an old woman—to me one day, “if the young ladies would but spend a little time in teaching poor girls how to cook, and to get their bread, 'twould

* These cards will be ready in February 1866.

be much better for 'em, than in making the rigmaroles which nobody cares for 'cept it be the young gentlemen as comes to see 'em, pr'aps ; an' they thinks 'em clever, and thinks they can surely make puddin's and pies, as can't be half the trouble ; but ladies don't know much now-a-days."

Days flew on swiftly and I had yet to find my new help ; at last she came as one who could cook, and was highly recommended as clean and economical. Maccaroni cheese in her first day's dinner was the first rock she split upon. Had "never seen maccaroni, didn't know what it meant."

Now I did not altogether care about teaching one to whom I was to give a cook's wages, so I said, "If you do not know, I must make it myself, and you must bring me the cheese from the larder," so a fine piece weighing four pounds was brought to me.

"Not that, cook, but a crust or rind of the cheese, which you will find there."

It was brought, and a look of incredulity beamed on the woman's face. I weighed six ounces of maccaroni and broke it in short pieces ; I then washed it in hot water, and then scraped well the outer part of the cheese, so that it was perfectly free from spot or speck ; six ounces of this was then grated with a coarse grater. The maccaroni was put on to boil in *boiling water*, in which was a piece of butter the size of a hazel-nut, and about an ounce of salt. In about twenty minutes boiling the maccaroni was soft. Some melted butter sauce was placed for use, which had been left from the previous day's dinner, or otherwise some must have been made of one ounce of butter and a little milk, water, and flour. A layer of cheese was placed in the *bottom* of a well-buttered shallow pie-dish, then a layer of maccaroni ; over this was poured a little of butter sauce, then a layer of cheese, and again of maccaroni and butter, till the dish was full ; lastly was a thick layer of the grated cheese, and then the butter sauce, and some tiny bits of butter were placed on the top. The whole was then baked in a hot oven for three-quarters of an hour, until the cheese was of a light golden brown. Care was taken not to serve it at table *too* hot. Thus for the cost of sixpence—if no more than eightpence a pound was paid for maccaroni—a handsome and always welcome dish was obtainable. The crust of cheese cannot be made use of in any other way. Grated cheese in a glass dish, a slice of fresh butter in another, some pulled crumb of roll browned in the oven, and placed on a white napkin, and some crisp celery or fresh watercresses, will often be acceptable for luncheon or supper, or as adjuncts after meat instead of sweets.

My new cook informed me she had always had a pint of milk to boil maccaroni in—notwithstanding she did not know what maccaroni was—and cream instead of butter sauce, and the cheese was always Parmesan, and so with a covert sneer she unwillingly proceeded to bake the, to her, objectionable dish, but which, however, I took good care she should taste.

The next thing we differed in was custards. I desired to have sufficient to fill twelve custard-glasses of the ordinary size.

“There are only four eggs in the house, ma’am, and I must have eight.”

“Four will be just the number you will require.”

“Never, ma’am, I can never make custards with four eggs, and it’s no use to try.”

“As they must be made, cook, if you do not like to make them, there is no alternative but to make them myself. Twelve custards can be made with three eggs if they are very large ones. You can watch me make them, if you please to do so, if not, you can employ yourself with something else.”

“But *ladies*,” with strong emphasis on the word, “don’t hire cooks and do the work themselves.”

“And if cooks won’t make custards, or anything else they are asked to cook, without waste, then ladies must, you know. Formerly it was the pleasure of ladies of rank and position to make all the sweets, pastry, pickles, and preserving, used in the house—to distil herbs for essences and other matters; and for this purpose they had a room to themselves, called the still-room; and then there were tolerable cooks to be had, who understood their business, for servants soon learned the right quantities of ingredients and materials to use, as these were always weighed or measured by the lady herself.”

While this talk went on, cook was standing by. I was busy measuring exactly a pint and a half of milk and weighing three ounces of moist sugar; then I turned it into a large basin, added a little nutmeg, and broke an egg into a small cup; then, if it was good, I threw it into the milk, and so on with the remaining eggs. Thus if an egg was bad, it could at once be thrown away. Then with a wire whisk I beat the whole together for five minutes, then poured the mixture into a clean saucepan, and put it over a clear fire, stirring it till it began to thicken sufficiently, then I quickly poured it from the saucepan *through a tin strainer*, into the basin. In a jug I dropped six drops of essence of almonds (which is now manufactured of a perfectly harmless kind,) and placed the tin strainer on the top, through which I again turned the custard, and

hen kept pouring it backwards and forwards till it was nearly cold. The glasses were then filled with a thick, rich custard, alike digestible and nourishing.

Celery sauce was another trouble to our well-paid cook; we were fond of it—had it often, and to us celerly was of little expense, as it grew in our garden. The first time it came to table it was black and hard, and certainly a quarter of a pound of butter had been used in the vain hope of making the sauce presentable at table. The next time, I went into the kitchen an hour before dinner, and had the celery pulled to pieces and washed, first in warm water, then in cold, then cut into small pieces half an inch long, and put into a pan of cold water (or it would turn black at the edge where the knife had cut it,) it was then drained and thrown into a saucepan of fast *boiling water*, in which was a little salt and a bit of bacon fat or butter the size of a nutmeg; it was made to boil up quickly, and in ten minutes from this time the celerly was ready for straining and mashing with a *wooden spoon* in a basin; it was then slightly floured while hot, and mixed with sufficient hot milk *to set it*. The sauce was then ready. No butter was required. It had only to be kept warm in a covered basin in the hot oven till wanted. *After celery is placed in milk it will not turn black.*

“These turnips are useless, ma'am,” was my greeting as I came into the kitchen one morning; “they seem to be very old.”

“We must make them do, cook; they won't be sticky when they are dressed. You will pare them, not too thickly, and instead of cutting them in quarters, as I suppose you do, you must cut them across the turnip in thin round slices *not a quarter of an inch thick*; wash them well, and put them in *plenty of boiling water*, with a lump of salt, a little piece of dripping the size of a walnut, and make them boil very fast; in a quarter of an hour or less time, they will be ready, then drain them in a colander, mash them with a wooden spoon, turn them into a basin and add some milk, make them hot in a covered basin in the oven, and serve them very hot in a warm dish.”

Again the sneer passed over the woman's face, and seeing it, I said very distinctly,

“I shall know in a moment if my instructions have been followed; if it should not suit you to do as I wish, please to say so, and I will do it myself.”

This last threat always acted rightly; anything but the mistress coming in the kitchen during cooking hours. I would say a few words respecting this matter. It is not needful, nor convenient nor proper, that a mistress should be with her servants at all hours

of the day. There is a time for all things, and a mistress so ceases to be respected, if she makes herself on an equal footing with her domestics ; as she must do if she invades their dominion at a hour. It is better to take the trouble to give the cook written directions how such a thing is to be cooked, and in the end it will be found less trouble. From an hour to an hour and a half is a the time that is needed to be in the kitchen of a morning, but the a mistress's work must be thoroughly done. Every part of the kitchen and larder must have a passing glance every day ; and the next day to that of the periodical cleaning, everything should undergo a close revision. A mistress will be informed, that "no lady will do such things"—which will be the least of the abuse that may be laid on her—either absent or present ; but this conduct of ill-behaved domestics should never be the excuse for ignoring a duty. If a mistress, by her knowledge of simple cookery and by her tact and good order, will but render herself independent of the so-called cooks, and take into her kitchen really helpful girls, there would be much less misery in households where very moderate means are at disposal, and much more comfort for husband and children.

Greens are perhaps the most wholesome vegetables in the world, but cooks will render them indigestible and sickening. Woe to those who partake of greens of a rusty colour, smelling of rank poison, or overcooked to a mash ! For a week the unwary eater will suffer a martyrdom in health and temper. The right way to boil greens or brocoli is to wash each head singly in warm water then in cold, where they must remain two hours, then be drained. A large saucepan full of boiling water, in which place a lump of salt and a piece of washing soda the size of a horse bean ; when this is dissolved put in the greens, cover *them closely*, make them boil up *very fast*, then put them down well into the water and cover again. Turnip greens will cook thus in five minutes, bunch greens in a quarter of an hour, brocoli in twenty minutes, a savoy about the same time ; then let the water be drained from them through a colander, be pressed closely down with a plate, and the colander be kept over a saucepan of hot water, but not to touch it, to keep warm till they are needed. The green water must never be thrown down a drain within the house or out of it, but be thrown into a garden or on coal ashes, or on the earth.

Where washing is done at home, washing days are a misery from morning to night. The charwoman comes before it is light, and between her and the servants a chattering match begins, which ends only with her departure usually laden with all that can be dis-

posed of without suspicion. It will be best to consider that this last irremediable evil must be one of the calculated expenses of washing at home. If it cannot be openly countenanced, it seems impossible but that it must be convived at, or open war is declared between both parties. But there is one thing a mistress can do; she can avoid leaving out the sugar and other things which may be a temptation, and she should also so employ her servant or servants that they shall have no time to waste in the wash-house. The helping which they give amounts to nothing compared to the mischief which arises from the gossiping. A very excellent housekeeper once gave me the following directions for a month's wash, which I have ever found to be extremely useful. On a Monday afternoon every article was put into scarcely warm water—a tub of cold water with a little soda stood by the side. All the white things were thus well soaped out of the warm water and laid in cold, there they remained till the next morning. In the remainder of the half day the flannels and coloured things were washed without soda, and for the latter a lather was made with mottled soap and boiling water, then a handful of salt added, and sufficient cold water to wash the coloured things one at a time—none were left to soak in the water, and as each article was washed it was thrown into a pan of cold water in which was a tablespoonful of powdered alum; and finally these were again rinsed in clean cold water and hung in the shade to dry, being careful not to double one part over another. The flannels were washed in lather and rinsed in soapy water, so also was the case with silk handkerchiefs. The next morning the white clothes were well kneaded with the hands, and the dirty water was thrown away, fresh hot water was added, and each article was then rubbed and lightly soaped, put into a white bag and thrown into a copper of cold water. The instant the water began to simmer the clothes were lifted out by the bag and quickly washed and blued. If the water is suffered to boil for five minutes, the dirt will stain the linen and make it a bad colour. Frequently this will happen, spite of all care in washing; and if three or four times a year the following bleaching process was resorted to, clothes would always remain a good colour and the fabric be not the least injured.

Take a pound of fresh chloride of lime and mix it gradually in ten quarts of water ($2\frac{1}{2}$ gallons.) After it has been well stirred, let it settle, and when clear pour it off through muslin tied over a colander or through a fine sieve, leaving the sediment behind, then add another gallon of cold water to the clear mixture. After the clothes have been once washed in warm water, instead of boiling

them, throw them into the bleaching liquid and let them remain six hours, then wring them, throw each article into cold water, wash them in warm water, rinse them in water slightly blued, and they will be found of a splendid colour. This bleaching liquid, bottled for use, should always be kept in the house for taking out vegetable, or port wine, or other stains, &c., from linen cloths and serviettes, but without the extra gallon of water. For collars and cuffs, pocket handkerchiefs, and children's things, when to boil them would make a fuss, the following answers admirably :—Take an ounce of chloride of lime and two quarts of cold water ; add to the water three drops of sulphuric acid ; then mix it with the lime in a jug, stir it well at intervals. In a night the sediment will settle ; pour off the clear part into a bottle ready for use. To make the bleaching liquid of double the strength, and add hot water to it when wanted.

These little matters a lady should herself attend to. One must not permit a servant to meddle with bleaching liquid if it be made of double strength, and the clothes will be burned into holes. It is necessary to observe that the instant each article is wrung out of the bleach it should be thrown into cold water.

There are many reasons why clothes will get a bad colour, let them be ever so carefully washed. The water may communicate a stain ; too much boiling will dye them ; too much soda communicate a yellow tint ; dried in the sun will blacken garments. But if dried in the open air at night they will frequently be bleached but not always so. It depends much on the state of the atmosphere ; moonlight has a good effect upon linen, and so have winter nights ; partial rain and partial moonlight have, in the writer's experience, bleached linen from brown to white.

I would here remark, that I have never had a servant, bad or good, from whom I could not learn something. My present cook was getting tractable and teachable, she was clean, and had method and management in her work ; and I was only too willing to pay good wages,—albeit, she knew nothing of cooking, though she thought herself very clever. She said to me one day while I was ironing,—

“ There are two or three little secrets in ironing, ma'am. I noticed you can't iron a pocket handkerchief without creasing it. You always begin on the outside that is next to the hem ; if you spread out your handkerchief and begin in the middle, the flat-iron would work out all the creases. And there's another thing ; if you use the bleach, all the marking-ink will come out. 'Twont stay agen' the bleach ; an' when you irons the children's frocks, wha-

mess they is in afore you've finished. A strip of board covered with thick blanket, and a piece of linen cloth outside, is what you should use for an ironing board ; then you can stand the ends of the board on the backs of two chairs ; or what is better, if you had two stout trestles made as high as the backs of the chairs, and stand the ends of the board on these, then turn the dress inside out, and slip the board through the pocket hole after you've ironed the body and sleeves,—lor' me, then the dress would just look bootiful ; but the best way is to have a board as long as your own dress, then put a sheet on the floor between the trestles or the backs of the chairs, an' you can iron your own dresses in no time on the narrow board. I knew some young ladies once, an' they always wore white morning dresses, an' the young lassies used to look so fresh and sweet-like ; but I used to wash the dresses, and when I showed 'em how to iron 'em, they soon learned. I was laundry-maid once, but I caught the rheumatism, and I was obliged to give over being in the damp."

CHAPTER X.

LEARNING FROM A SERVANT—HOW TO CLEAN SMOKED LAMP-CHIMNEYS
—TO CLEAN VARNISHED PAINTS, OIL PAINT, WINDOWS, AND LOOK-
ING-GLASSES—STAIR RODS—A NOVEL WAY OF OPENING OYSTERS
—A NEW WAY TO DRESS A HARE—A NEW WAY TO SERVE FOWLS
—HOW TO MAKE BREAD—TO TAKE THE BITTERNESS FROM YEAST
—THE CONCLUSION WITHOUT CONCLUDING, THERE BEING AN
APPENDIX ADDED.

day that it could not be cleaned, as soap took the varnish off. I saw Hannah smile, but she said nothing. The next morning on coming to breakfast, I was surprised at the freshness of the paint. It certainly had been cleaned, but how? "How was this done, Hannah?" I asked.

"I just boiled down the tea leaves left from yesterday, ma'am, then strained them, and while the liquor was hot, I washed the paint with it, using a soft piece of flannel, and then wiped it dry with a soft cloth; but then I didn't rub it round and round as some senseless girls do, but wiped it up and down just straight."

I did not credit the story till I tried it myself, then became astonished at the cleansing properties of tea infusions: for discoloured varnished pictures, French polished, or other furniture, could all be cleaned from dirt without injury to the original varnish. The paint could not be cleaned but with *white curd soap* and water, and a soft flannel. *This kind of soap contains less soda than any other* therefore destroys the paint less.

I also found that tea liquor cleaned looking-glasses and windows better than anything else.

I had been accustomed to have the stair-rods cleaned with brick-dust and vinegar, at which Hannah expressed much surprise.

"Rotten-stone and oil, ma'am, will make 'em keep their colour twice as long, but the vinegar turns 'em black a'most directly. I know the girls will use the vinegar because they can scour quick with it, just as they will wash up dinner glasses with hot water when they should use cold. Glasses that have been washed in cold water won't polish well."

I found Hannah was often right in such matters I did not understand, that I found her in many ways invaluable to me, though she knew nothing about the art of cooking; but yet she could tell me much. My friends around me were now perpetually changing their servants, even those mistresses who had heretofore kept them for years; and as change brought nothing but sorrow to them, I thought it best to bear the ills I had, though her ignorance in some matters was excessive. One day we had a barrel of oysters sent us; my husband knew of their arrival during my absence, and had directed Hannah to open some and send them up for supper at nine o'clock, as he would not be home; but she would not tell that she was not to mention anything about the oysters, as that would be an agreeable surprise to me. I had been home about an hour, and was lying on the sofa, very weary, when I heard great hammering, and imagining that Hannah was only busily employed in breaking lumps of coal, I let the mat-

but still the hammering went on till it became unbearable, when I rose up and went down-stairs to the kitchen. There was Hannah on her knees surrounded by smashed oysters, and herself wielding a heavy coal hammer. I really imagined I was dreaming. Hannah looked up innocently enough, when I caught her arm as the hammer was descending upon another victim.

"Master said I was to open the oysters for your supper, ma'am."

"Why, Hannah, did you never open or see oysters opened?"

"Never in my life, missus," and she rose up from her knees in a state of bewilderment.

Though about two dozen of these luscious delicacies had been destroyed, I could not help laughing at the woman's mistake. Dora Copperfield was no myth after all, I thought; and I had never believed till now in the truth of an engraving I had seen in the comic serial *Fun*, representing a cook, who would not allow of the mistress's interference in the kitchen, but one day being told to dress a hare, and dinner-time approaching, and no appetising smell ascending from the kitchen, the mistress entered the forbidden precincts, and found the hare in the cook's lap half denuded of its fur, and she complaining of the trouble in plucking it, and of the toughness of its skin.* One Christmas we had a turkey served up without the *crop* being drawn; in carving, some of the oats got on to the meat, and lay glistening in the plate of a guest then dining with us. But this was nothing to one who served up at a friend's table some fowls, woodcock fashion—that is, without taking any of the inside away. Afterwards I always examined the fowls before they were put to the fire. I never could draw poultry in my life—could not look at it while being done; and therefore, to prevent any such disaster for the future, I obtained from a friend some written directions† how to draw the insides from poultry and game. The reason of the mistake in both instances of the poultry being so disgustingly served was, not in the wilfulness, but in the ignorance of the poor girls, who did not know that the *crop*, *craw*, or first stomach of a bird, and the intestines, came from two different places.

I found Hannah a great help to me in baking. We used brewers' yeast, and the bread was frequently bitter. We never had it so much so with Hannah, but yet it was bitter in a trifling degree. She told me she put a piece of burned bread into the yeast when it was set, to leaven the flour. The hint was enough. I tried a piece of charcoal the next time, and not having any in the house,

* See frontispiece, the permission to reprint it having been obligingly given.

† See Appendix.

easily made some. Lying about were some empty crochet cotton reels. I took two of the largest, threw them into a clear fire, and just as they ceased to blaze, extracted them with the tongs and threw them into a basin of cold water. The charcoal was made. Any wood will do, as oak, beech, sycamore, hazel, or ash, all *excepting deal wood*.

I will give here an excellent recipe for home-made bread, the perfection of which depends upon three things,—*that the brewers yeast be not bitter, or the German yeast sour*; that after leaven is made into sponge, *it be well kneaded*, and then care be taken *that it be not chilled* before making into loaves. Place in a pan a quarter of flour, three and a half pounds, mix together in a basin four tablespoonfuls of brewers' yeast, (*in which a lump of charcoal has been steeped for an hour*), then take out the latter, add a pint and half of warm water or milk, and two teaspoonfuls of salt, (if German yeast, one ounce must be used, which if sour, must have a pinch or two of carbonate of soda mixed with it.) Make a hole in the centre of the flour, pour in the mixture of yeast, water or milk, and salt stir the flour into it, *make it into dough, and knead it well*. *The more bread dough is kneaded the lighter the bread will be, but care must be taken not to chill it*. Make it up into loaves, and fill the tins, and let it stand on a hot oven plate, covered with a wooller cloth. For it to rise a half-an-hour before baking it for two hours in a *hot oven*, with the oven door closed for a quarter of an hour then set the door ajar, and bake the bread *slowly* for two hours less or more, according to the size of the loaves. In taking them from the oven, turn them out of the tin, and set them bottom upwards slantways in the tin, either near the fire or on the top of the oven. Thus the bread will be light; but if bread, or cakes, or pastry, be suddenly removed from the oven to the cold air, they will be heavy.

It is in little things that comfort greatly depends. It is said “There is never a wrong without a remedy,” and fortunately in wholesome cooking, it is not expensive articles which are needed to ensure success. It is a knowledge of how to do a thing, and a what time—a little practice and observation. To the learner, success in any art can never come but with untiring patience, observation and an entire willingness to master all difficulties. It has been my desire to bring some comfort to homes where the mistress is unskilled and the servant is incompetent, and where the extravagance of the latter is but a blind for her ignorance. In life waste is the greatest, and most extensive in small matters, and because they are trifles they are unheeded. And in a household

is small matters that overwhelm people with debt. Besides, waste makes people parsimonious and inhospitable, and irritable and cross, because they have not wherewith to assist the sick or help the poor.

“He that despiseth small things shall fall by little and little, for there is nothing in the earth so small, that it may not produce great things.”

“A landmark was once a seed; and the dust in the balance maketh a difference;

“And the cairn is heaped high by each one flinging a pebble;

“The dangerous bar in the harbour’s mouth is only grains of sand;

“And the shoal that hath wrecked a navy is the work of a colony of worms;

“And the living rock is worn by the diligent flow of the brook.”

To which aphorisms I may add,—

“WRETCHED COOKING MAKES WEARY SICKNESS,
AND SLOW WASTE BRINGS SPEEDY POVERTY.”

APPENDIX.

HINTS ON COOKING.

I.—SOUP.

STOCK for soup may be made from the bones of joints of meat, added to any trimmings from cutlets, chops, &c. Some cold water, mace, an bones must be boiled in an iron saucepan for six or eight hours, then b strained through a colander, be left till next day, when the fat must be take off, and if not then a strong jelly, the liquor must be returned to the bone; and all be boiled over again for some hours. There must be no vegetable boiled with it, and not the least fat; and when it is cold, all fat that ma accidentally be there must be taken off. Stock must be made the day befor it is to be used. It is this stock which makes hashes and stews delicious which enriches all over-cooked meats, and which forms the basis of all soup—pea-soup excepted. Other soups must be coloured with burnt sugar.

II.—FISH.

Fish for frying must be washed, dried, and rolled in flour for an hour before cooking, and then be placed, the *skinned side downwards*, in plenty of boiling dripping. A sole must never be turned on the reverse side *till* it will lie firm over the centre of a knife or fish-slice. When removed from the pan it must be laid on clean paper before the fire, to free it from any fat which may adhere. After a few minutes it must be removed to a very hot dish. There is no need of egg and bread crumbs.

In boiling fish—of whatever kind—the water must be *nearly boiling*, whether it be used in a frying-pan or in a fish-kettle. To preserve the colour of salmon, a wineglassful of vinegar and a lump of salt must be added; the latter to all fresh fish. Horseradish boiled in the water gives cod a superior flavour. Soles must be covered with boiling water and *never turned*, consequently the skinned side must be placed in uppermost.

To cook Sprats.—Wash, dry, and flour them, rub a bit of butter round a hot frying-pan, lay them in not to touch; in one minute turn them, and in two minutes take them up, spread them in a large hot dish before the fire for a minute or two, then take each up singly on to a small hot dish, and serve directly.

To loosen skins of Shrimps and Prawns.—Put them in a basin, pour boiling

water and cover close for five minutes, then put them in a colander and hold them under a tap of cold water; then shake them in a cloth till they are dried.

Plaice to Fry.—Have middle-sized fish filleted by the fishmonger, (each fish will give four pieces,) wash and dry them well, make a *thick* batter of flour and a little milk—or without the latter; put some batter in a flat dish, dip in both sides of the fish, (the batter should lie like a skin on the fish,) lay the *white* side of the plaice in plenty of boiling fat; when it is stiff across the knife and of a light brown, turn it on the other side. When it is cooked, place it on paper to absorb the fat, and then on a clean hot dish. If any roe is sent with it, cut it in small pieces the size of marbles, dip it in batter and fry it. Serve with a tablespoonful of anchovy sauce to six of melted butter sauce, and add a little other sauce or ketchup.

A Findon haddock should be divided in halves, be beaten, the skin side downwards, on a table, then be skinned from the tail upwards; be laid, the skinned side downwards, in a frying-pan of *boiling water* only enough to cover. Then cook from three to five minutes according to the size, let it be taken up carefully and turned, the bones downwards, on a hot dish, have some butter rubbed on it before the fire, and be served hot.

III.—MEAT.

All meats for boiling, whether they be salted or fresh, should be placed in nearly boiling water. Let the water boil up rapidly, then draw the saucepan back, and only allow it to simmer gently. “Meat boiled is meat spoiled.”

A deep or shallow fish-kettle with a drainer in it will be the best saucepan for use, as no fork should be stuck in the meat, and it can be lifted by the drainer.

In a neck of mutton, a breast of veal, a brisket of beef, or any similar joint, the bones must be placed *upwards* in the water, (to prevent the curling up of the joint,) the two former be boiled twenty-five minutes to the pound, and the beef half-an-hour to each pound, *always allowing an extra ten minutes for warming through*.

Roast meats must be placed before a clear fire, which must not be stirred while the meat is cooking. Meat must be well floured before placing it at the fire or in the oven.

The oven door should never be quite shut while meat is baking, or the meat will have an unpleasant taste. *If the cavity situate at the side of the oven (at the back of the grate) be not quite cleared from the fine ash-dust which will accumulate there every day, the oven will not bake.* Sometimes this is needed twice a-day.

Stewed Steak or Pie.—Do not fry the meat first, as this extracts the goodness. A brown colour may be given to the meat by using burnt sugar. Choose the meat from the shin of beef, this is far richer than any other for the purpose. If for a stew, cut the meat into pieces the size for helping, but cut away most of the fat, roll them in flour and lightly pepper them, and place them in a tin. Mix in a basin, with very little cold water, one tablespoonful of flour, set it with boiling water till like a gravy, colour it with boiling water poured over burnt sugar, or previously made as at p. 55, then pour it over the meat just to cover it. Shred some onions in rings and cut them across, slice thin some ready-boiled carrot and parsnip, sprinkle some salt over the vegetables, place them on the meat, and the fat upon the top of all. Cover the tin closely with a dish and bake it for three hours in a hot oven.

Stew the meat in like manner if wanted for a pie, only stewing two hours but omit the vegetables, only putting in a whole onion with three cloves in it. When it is cold make a paste crust to line the dish and for a cover and bake one hour and ten minutes. Stock for both purposes is better water.

Harrico mutton is much the same as beef stew. Or a gravy might be made from stock, or fry the vegetables first, and strain them from the fat, then mix flour water and burnt sugar, pepper, and salt; strain it and make it in the frying pan, then put the vegetables and liquor together into a sauce and let it boil for half-an-hour. Get some tender chops, free them from fat and trim them (the fat will fry the vegetables, the trimmings will go to the stock pot,) broil them over a clear fire, or fry them by putting them well flour into boiling fat and turning them frequently, then when they are cooked put them in a dish and pour the vegetables over them, and serve hot. If chops are cut from cooked mutton, then they must stew slowly two hours with vegetables, as meat is always hard when once cooked.

Hashed Mutton.—Cut the meat in thin slices, and take away all the fat. Mix two tablespoonfuls of flour, a grating of nutmeg, and a little pepper, roll the meat in this till it is quite covered, put it in a pie-dish, add a little gravy or water, till just level with the meat; shred finely some onions, put the top, cover with a well-fitting flat dish, and bake two hours. A bacon covered with a plate or in a saucepan will do equally well.

The reason why a saucepan is not preferable for hashes or stews is that heat does not surround the saucepan so equally as it does in an oven.

Tops of Ribs Stewed or Tops of Sirloin.—Place the meat in a saucepan in *boiling* water, bones *uppermost*, and stew gently two hours; the water must just cover it. When it is cooked, so that on taking up it *shakes* as if tender, pour off the liquor in which it was boiled into a broad flat dish, draw a piece of clean paper along the surface to absorb the fat, and repeat the process (enough time with fresh paper) till no fat can be seen, return the liquor to the saucepan, mix in cold water a teaspoonful of flour, stir it in the liquor, colour it with boiling water over burned sugar, let it warm through, pour it over the meat (which must have been kept warm in a dish over a saucepan of hot water,) and then serve quickly.

Or cut the meat up in finger lengths and two inches broad, put it in *barely boiling* water enough to cover it, stew it gently an hour and a half, keeping it turned occasionally, serve without gravy, in a *wall* of mashed potatoes.

A Breast of Veal, or part of one is better, first roasting quickly, brown it only, or baking it in a hot oven for an hour or less, so that it is brown, *bones uppermost*, then putting it into *barely sufficient boiling* water to cover the bones, which must still be *uppermost*, and letting it gently stew till a fork will run through it without the meat feeling hard. Veal is the only meat that can be tried in this way without injury to its juices.

An Ox Kidney Stew.—Cut out and throw away the hard white part, divide it in the creases, or to keep it whole is best. Mix two tablespoonfuls of flour with a little cold water, set it with *boiling water*, (a very little more than will cover the kidney,) stick some cloves in a large onion, have a *piece of bacon fat* (no other kind) the size of a walnut, put altogether with the kidney in a saucepan, and stew it four hours. When it is cooked it will be quite tender. Take it up, cut out the white part, and throw it away. Then serve it, set it in a small dish; in the centre of the kidney put a thin piece of toast, and upon that again some mashed or fried potatoes, serve the gravy (in which put a spoonful of mushroom ketchup) round the kidney, not over it.

Stock instead of water is preferable for this dish, which, to those who like kidneys, is juicy, tender, and appetising, and perfectly digestible. To make a French dish of it, add when serving some freshly stewed mushrooms.

Fricassee of Rabbits.—Take two rabbits, cut them in pieces, that is shoulders and legs, and each back in three pieces, (use these portions only, the rest will make stock.) Wash them in warm water to cleanse from the blood. Put them in rather more than enough *boiling* water to cover them, add a blade of mace; let them boil up quickly, and then simmer for twenty minutes. During this time boil half a pint of milk with two oz. of butter, then with a little cold water mix a tablespoonful of flour and a half a teaspoonful of sugar, *set* it with the boiling milk, lay the rabbit in a large pie-dish, at the bottom have a fine shred or two of onions, pour the sauce over, cover with a flat dish, and bake an hour. Serve with roast bacon and mashed potatoes.

Beef hearts and veal hearts must be thrown into boiling water, in which a piece of dripping has been boiled, and thus semi-cooked, the one for an hour the other half an hour, and suffered to get cold before stuffing and roasting, then well lard with bacon fat and flour before roasting, each the same time as directed for boiling.

IV.—VEGETABLES.

Old potatoes must be well washed before peeling, and in two waters afterwards, but both immediately before *steaming*; by steaming them *generally* an hour, they are never soddened or waxy, unless the potatoes are really bad, then no mode of cooking will avail. Salt must be sprinkled on them when put on to steam, *always over boiling water*.

New potatoes must be scraped, washed, and put on to cook in boiling water scarcely covering them; as soon as they begin to break, the water must be strained away, the cover be lifted from the saucepan, the steam allowed to escape, then the cover be put on again, the saucepan turned upside down and then turned the right way, and the cover taken off, a little salt be sprinkled over, and the saucepan be left at the side of the fire for a few minutes, before serving the potatoes.

Fried Potatoes, sliced.—These must be cut the round way of the potatoe, not lengthways, be rolled in flour, and fried in *boiling bacon fat* or dripping. A small fish-kettle with a drainer makes an excellent frying-pan for potatoes. Have as much boiling fat in the bottom as will cover the drainer and potatoes, place the slices regularly in the drainer, plunge it into the boiling fat, and let them remain a few minutes till brown, then lift the drainer, place the slices on some paper to absorb the fat, then serve them in a very hot dish.

Potato Balls.—Take some boiled potatoes when cold, mash three breakfast cupfuls, mix a little bacon fat or butter, some pepper, salt, and an onion finely minced, add a cupful of minced meat, and mix altogether with an egg well beaten, roll them into balls, flour them well, and fry in *boiling fat*.

Greens.—Remember always to boil greens with a small piece of washing soda, in *plenty* of boiling water and salt. Soda in moderation is very wholesome, and in one case an excellent medicine. As an experiment, boil greens without soda, the greens will be strong, perhaps rusty, and the water clear and tasteless; try a bit of soda the size of a horse-bean, the water will be black and fetid, the cabbage or brocoli or greens be sweet and wholesome, giving neither flatulence nor acidity. But to eat greens boiled without soda, or boiled too long, will give indigestion for a week. If, in keeping greens warm

in the colander over the liquor, the latter be allowed to touch the vegetables, the effect will be as hurtful as if they were left to soak in the green water after they were cooked; in either case they become almost poisonous.

Have plenty of *boiling water* and salt for all vegetables. Make them boil up *very quickly*. Take all greens out of the water the instant they are done. Turnips, carrots, artichokes, celery, or onions will not hurt if kept in for a few minutes; they may lose their colour, but will not be unwholesome, and with these let the water have fat, but no soda in it.

With green peas use no soda except it be the size of a pea. French beans the same.

Mash all vegetables with a wooden spoon.

Throw away the green liquor anywhere outside the house, either on the ground or in ashes; never down a drain, either inside or outside the house.

To make Onion Sauce to be eaten with thin streaked and well boiled pickled pork, which tastes like tripe, or as sauce for mutton, rabbits, &c.

Have a saucepan of boiling water in which is a lump of salt and a bit of bacon fat or dripping, the size of a bean. Cut the onions in *very thin* rings, throw them into the boiling water, make them boil very fast. In six or eight minutes they will be sufficiently cooked, (a minute longer will take all taste from them,) throw them into a basin, flour them *slightly*, mash them quickly with a wooden spoon, and mix in a little milk, then cover the basin with a plate and put in the oven to re-warm.

To boil Onions—Peel and wash them, throw them into plenty of boiling water with a bit of fat and a lump of salt. Let them boil *quickly, very quickly, for an hour*. They must not be exposed to the air, but be drained quickly and served with or without white sauce over, or with cold butter. Cooked in this way, they are like marrow, and exceedingly wholesome.

Any vegetables excepting potatoes, brocoli, and cauliflower, are as well cooked in the morning as when the fire is wanted for perhaps other things, if the dinner be a late one.

Wash all vegetables in warm water, each kind singly, then in cold, where they must remain for an hour.

Water rather more than warm kills all insects, worms, and snails, and *makes them drop out* of vegetables.

Respecting the boiling Fat with Vegetables, &c.—It may be objected that such a process would render the articles greasy and indigestible. A greater mistake cannot be made than is this supposition. If fat were boiled with greens, nothing could be worse; there is too much oil in them already, for which the soda is used to extract into the water, and which, if retained in the greens, renders them positively unwholesome. Onions, carrots, turnips, artichokes, and celery have no oil in their compositions, but they require the softest of water to boil them in. Soda would turn them black, and there is nothing so clean as a piece of dripping or fat off meat to have the desired effect. The vegetables do not absorb it, nor do they appear greasy, or if by any accident they do so, a little boiling water poured over them will take it away. Perhaps there is no greater waste in a vegetable than in the article of TURNIPS. If they are *cut* and boiled as described at p. 79, one bunch, of eight or ten roots, will fill two vegetable dishes, and suffice for eight persons; but if done in the ordinary method, by water and overboiling, two bunches will be needed. By adding milk, instead of butter, the turnips are made creamy and richer, and are not subject to give indigestion as when butter is used with them.

Vegetables to be used for soup should never be boiled in it, but be properly prepared before-hand, so as for each to retain its own flavour. Only thus cooked are they digestible.

V.—SWEETS AND PASTRY.

For good pies and puddings use always double the quantity of flour to that of fat—1 lb. of flour to half-a-pound of fat, whether butter, dripping, bacon-fat, or lard. To make short crust, rub all the fat into the flour, add but little water to it, to keep it tolerably dry; that is, it must be crumbling when turned out of the mixing-bowl. Roll it out and roll it up again three times; then roll it out, place the top of the pie-dish upon it, and cut round it for the cover, which set on one side. Fold up the pieces into one, and roll it out lengthways in a strip, then cut it down the centre, butter the edges of the dish, and line them with these strips, letting the straight edge come at the edge of the dish. With a paste-brush wet the edge of the paste; pile the dish with fruit; put in a little water and sufficient sugar. Place on the cover—see that the edges are closely joined. Make no hole in the centre, but put the tart into a very hot oven for a quarter of an hour; then the paste will have risen, and the oven-door may be opened, to permit the baking to go on slowly.

Flaky paste is made with the same proportions of fat and flour. One-third only is rubbed in the flour; then it is mixed with a little water, so that it is crumbling when turned out from the mixing-bowl. Roll it out; put in little pinches half of the fat or butter, all over; dredge it lightly with flour. Roll it up, and repeat the same process again; then roll it out to the shape and size required.

Pastry must not be handled; the knife or spoon and finger-tips are sufficient, after rubbing in the fat and mixing with a spoon.

If it be made too wet, it will be as heavy as if much handled.

In puddings made with suet, the latter should be chopped very fine, and always in weight half the quantity of the flour used, and the pudding be boiled never less than two hours. It will then be wholesome and light.

Half an ounce of sugar will sweeten half a pint of milk.

One large egg will suffice to make custard of half a pint of milk.

Half an ounce of rice ground or whole, of tapioca or corn-flour, and arrowroot, will thicken half a pint of milk.

To know what sugar, &c., must be given out for milk puddings, measure the dish to know what quantity it holds—a quart dish, holding by measure four half-pints of milk, will take for a baked custard four eggs, two ounces of sugar, a quarter of nutmeg and ten drops of almond flavouring. A rice pudding—two ounces of rice, two ounces of sugar, and in like proportions of anything else.

To save two eggs in a tapioca pudding, use a piled teaspoonful of corn-flour, or arrowroot instead. Tapioca will not dissolve in milk,—wash it in cold water three times; then with a very little cold water put it in the oven, and when it looks a little *clear*, which will be a few minutes, rub in the arrowroot or flour; then add the milk by degrees. Corn-flour and arrowroot puddings want no eggs; the former is better to be boiled; the latter, after first mixing like starch, should be *set* with boiling milk.

Whole rice requires no eggs; it is to be washed in *boiling* water three times, be put into a dish and mixed with sugar and nutmeg, the milk be poured on, a very little butter be put on the centre, and then be baked slowly for three hours.

All milk puddings should have two or three *pinches* of butter on the top, to prevent the milk from burning.

Wash currants and raisins in *warm water*, and let them be dry, so that they will not stick together, before using.

Sultana raisins are better for all puddings than any other kind. The raisins which are stoned generally have the richest part taken out with the stones, leaving an indigestible mass of skins to be eaten. Only remember that whatever quantity of Sultana raisins are used, the one-half must be *chopped* before using.

Currants frequently disagree with weak digestions, and should be sparingly if ever eaten.

The oil contained in lemon or orange, and spices, seldom digests readily.

Eggs are not needed in fritters, neither are they in Christmas plum-puddings.

Excellent fritters as thus made:—Take eight ounces of flour and some nutmeg, and mix with it a quarter of a pound of sugar. Take a quarter of a pint of new ale, (not bitter,) and mix it with a pint and a half of milk, make it into a smooth batter and *strain it*; let it stand two hours before using. Cut up some apples into slices, the size of a shilling, and a quarter of an inch thick; do not mix them with the batter. Take a small tea-cup, fill it a quarter full with batter, put in two or three pieces of apple, then pour it gently into a clean frying-pan half full of boiling lard, bacon fat, or dripping; *a fritter should not be turned, the boiling fat should cover it and make it brown*. When it is so, remove it with a perforated egg-drainer on to clean paper. These fritters should be sent to table on a sheet of ornamented paper, and then be covered with sifted white sugar, and served with cut lemons on glass, china saucers, or plates.

All frying should be done in boiling fat of whatever kind; if it be only hot and not boiling, the articles stick to the pan, and look white or dirty.

A *Christmas plum-pudding with or without eggs*.—Take two pounds of bread crumbs that have been well sifted through a colander; two tablespoonfuls of flour; half an ounce of ground allspice, and one pound of brown moist sugar; rub these ingredients thoroughly well together; chop one pound of suet very fine, and thoroughly mix in with the other things. Wash well in tepid water a pound and a half of raisins, and stone them, or two pounds of Sultana raisins, which require no stoning, and are equally good, though more expensive; chop these, not too fine, and well mix in; then a pound of well-washed currants, and a quarter of a pound of candied peel cut into lumps, *not slices*. Having mixed all this together well, make the whole sufficiently moist with a little ale; well butter one or more large basins; well press the mixture into the bottom of each (or they will not turn out in good shape), and when filled to a trifle above the brim of the basin, spread some flour on the top, and tie the basin down with a well-wetted cloth; place the pudding in boiling water, let it boil up rapidly, and so continue for four hours; then take it up, remove the cloth, but do not turn it out of the basin. The next day, or when wanted for use, put the pudding to warm with the basin still on, for two hours, in a moderately warm oven, then take it out, turn it from the basin on to the dish in which it is to be sent to table. With the handle of a tea-spoon or the blade of a fruit-knife, make incisions in different parts of the pudding, and pour on brandy or rum, then sift powdered sugar over. It is obvious that this pudding must be made the day before it is required for use, and it is much better for being so. Eggs are not necessary to give either richness or flavour, or to “bind the pudding;” the ale and the flour will do that. Eggs render the mass thoroughly indigestible; but if they must still

be had, and we again repeat that they are not needed, eight eggs, well beaten and strained, can be used instead of the ale. Great care is necessary in all puddings of the kind, not to make them too wet, or they will be heavy; and to thoroughly mix the ingredients separately.

Exquisitely delicious Mince Pies.—Take a pound of the undressed under-cut of sirloin of beef, mince it very fine indeed, put it into a pie dish, cover it with a flat dish, and put it into a moderately hot oven till it is cooked; drain off the fat from it thoroughly, and mix in two ounces of fresh butter, and half an ounce of finely ground allspice; four large apples pared, cored, and chopped very fine, and mixed in; half a pound of Sultana raisins washed and chopped fine, and mixed in; half a pound of currants well washed; three tablespoonfuls of moist sugar; three ounces of candied orange peel (not lemon,) chopped rather fine. Mix the whole of these ingredients well together; then place a half-pound preserve jar of raspberry jam in boiling water, but without letting any water enter, and without uncovering the jar, till the jam is dissolved; then strain the jam over the ingredients, taking care not to let the slightest portion of the seeds escape; throw these latter away, then mix the whole thoroughly. An excellent and simple paste for these or any other pies is thus made: weigh a pound of flour, and half a pound of sweet butter or lard; rub the half of the lard into the flour; and after this, the hands must not touch it. The whole process must now be continued with a spoon, a knife, and the tips of the fingers. Now slightly wet the flour, and mix it with a spoon; the paste must be very dry, or it will be heavy; now roll it in a long strip; with the point of the knife, place half the lard or butter, in tiny bits, over the whole; sift a little flour over; with the point of the knife fold the paste over in narrow folds, and roll it out again the same way. Never turn the paste round. With the remainder of the lard, act precisely the same again: after this second rolling, fold it the same way again, and roll it to a sufficient thickness for the covers of the pies; then turning the patty-pans downwards on the paste, but without pressure, cut the paste round to the size; the remainder of the paste roll out and line the patty-pans; then fill them with the mince meat; put on the covers without wetting the edges, and bake them in a very quick oven for a few minutes, or as long as necessary, but the quicker the better, so that they are sufficiently cooked. When the pies are nearly cold, lift the corner of each, and pour over the mince a teaspoonful of brandy. These will keep good for three weeks. The peculiarity in these pies is, that no suet is used, which agrees but with few people, and that the juice of the raspberries gives them an indescribable but delicious flavour.

VI.—HOMELY BUT EXCELLENT PICKLES.

To Pickle Cabbage.—Cut the cabbage in thin slices, put a layer of it and a layer of salt alternately; let it stand twenty-four hours, then spread it abroad; pour boiling water over the whole (taking care that the water is poured on all,) let it drain and remain until quite cold; fill the bottles, &c., with the cabbage, then pour cold spiced vinegar on it and fasten down.

Pickled Cauliflower.—Break in pieces a nice head of cauliflower, and wash it in warm water, then in cold, and drain it. Have ready some boiling water, in which has been boiled a lump of salt and a piece of soda the size of a hazel-nut. Throw the cauliflower in, and let it boil quickly one minute; drain it, and spread it out to dry and cool; mix two ounces of mustard, half an ounce of moist sugar and salt in a little cold vinegar, set it with half a pint of boiling vinegar, put the cauliflower into jars or pickle glasses with three cloves in each, and

fill up with vinegar. When cold cork it down; it is ready for use in a week.

Pickled Onions.—Choose the small silver onion. Tie a quantity of them unpeeled loosely up in a piece of old muslin; plunge them into quickly boiling water in which a lump of salt has been boiled; let them boil up *two minutes*, then take them out, and plunge them instantly into cold water. The inside of the onion will then slip out. Do not let the air come to them, but throw each onion directly it is slipped into boiling vinegar, in which has been boiled a dozen cloves, and two teaspoonfuls of sugar to every pint of vinegar.

VII. AN EXCELLENT SALAD WITHOUT EGGS.—Take one saltspoonful of salt, the same of dry mustard, and two of moist sugar, mix them well together, add and mix three tablespoonfuls of fresh salad oil; blend these together with a spoon in a basin; then mash on a plate with a flexible knife two large mealy potatoes; mix this also with the oil, &c., till it is to a paste; shred a small onion as *fine* as possible, cut it and mash it with the back of a knife till it is a paste, mix this also and add; then add and mix two tablespoonfuls of anchovy sauce, and two of vinegar, mix it all well. Wash twice, but separately, two lettuces with white hearts in warm water, then plunge them into cold for an hour, then shake them dry, cut them up in pieces an inch long, and on a clean cloth *dab* them dry; then mix the dressing altogether with the salad; cut up thin slices of beetroot,—and place upon it, thus this salad bears a close resemblance to lobster salad.

Beetroot must never be washed before cooking. Wrap it up in a sheet of newspaper, and bake it on the uppermost plate of a hot oven for two hours.

To Draw Poultry or Game.—After plucking it clean from the feathers, make a long slit at the back of the neck. Put in the fingers, and take out the *kin* containing the crop. Cut off the bone of the neck quite close to the breast of the bird, but leave the skin of a good length.

To take out the intestines turn the bird breast upwards; make a slit just above the tail, only large enough for the gizzard to come through; then put in the fingers and detach all the intestines, pressing the bird down to squeeze them out; and be careful not to break the gall-bladder, which, if done, would render the bird uneatable.

VIII. READY REMEDIES.—When a chimney is on fire, throw a quantity of salt on the fire. In a modern-built house such an event is rarely dangerous; it only is so in old houses having woodwork in the chimney.

For a burn or scald, use glycerine or cotton wool, or tie it up in oiled silk. *For stings of wasps or bees*, use sweet oil. *For chapped hands*, use glycerine every night. *For chilblains*, soak the parts in hot water, and rub in spirits of turpentine. *For toothache*, hold a piece of rock alum in the mouth. *For sore throat*, a teaspoonful of Cayenne pepper in a tumbler of water, and gargle the throat. *For hiccups*, put a drop or two of vinegar on the tongue. *For ring-worm*, rub with borax dissolved in a little water. *For deafness*, drop in three times a day two drops of the following:—In two ounces of oil of almonds put half a dram of turpentine; shake well before using. *For bleeding cuts*, bind round cotton wool.

